BHAGAVAD
Gītā

WITH THE COMMENTARY OF
ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA

Translated by
SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

Advaita Ashrama

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE
TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present English translation of the Bhagavad Gita along with the commentary of Śrī Śaṇkarācārya by Swāmī Gambhīrānanda, the 11th President of the Ramakrishna Order, has been widely accepted as one of the most authentic translations. We are pleased to present this fully revised and computerised second edition as per the modern printing standards. Hope this will be warmly received by the readers as the previous edition.

April 2018 PUBLISHER

PUBLISHER'S NOTE
TO THE FIRST EDITION

The publication of this edition of the *Bhagavad gītā* by us fulfils a long-felt need, namely, to make available to the public interested in Advaita Vedānta a faithful English translation of Śaṇkarācārya's commentary on this sacred scripture. It is well known that the *Gītā* is one of the constituents of the *prasthāna-traya*, three source-books, of the Vedānta Darśana. It is called the *smṛti-prasthāna*, as it forms a part of the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*.

The translator, Swāmī Gambhīrānanda, one of the Vice Presidents of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, needs no introduction to those who have studied his *Eight Upaniṣads* (in two volumes, each of which is also separately published), his *Brahma-Sūtra-Bhāṣya of Śaṅkarācārya*, published nearly two decades back, and his *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, published recently—all by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. He now offers this translation of the *bhāṣya* of Śaṅkarācārya on this very important scripture, *Bhagavadgītā*, which, as the translator remarks in his valuable Introduction, 'is ranked among the greatest religious books of the world'. In this informative and scholarly Introduction, he has discussed in brief such subjects as the date of the Mahābhārata war, which provided the occasion for the birth of the *Gītā*, the historicity of the Gītācārya Kṛṣṇa, the importance and influence of the *Gītā* on other countries, the date of

Śaṅkarācārya—well documented and fortified by the views of several savants, both of the East and the West, and by referring to inscriptions.

The method followed in translating this *bhāṣya* is the same as in his translation of the Upaniṣads. With the publication of this book, the present translator has done the monumental work of rendering into English Śaṅkarācārya's *bhāṣya* on the entire gamut of the *prasthāna-traya*, with the only exception of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, the commentary on which by Śaṅkara was translated by Swāmī Mādhavānanda of revered memory and first published by us in July 1934.

It may be noted that, while the *ślokas* are in *devanāgarī*, only the English rendering of such expressions as *Śrībhagavānuvāca*, *Arjuna uvāca*, are given in the book. A very useful feature of this edition of the *Bhagavadgītā* is the inclusion of a 'Word Index' to the entire text, apart from an Index to the first words of the *ślokas*, which, we believe, will be found helpful to both scholars and students alike. It is our earnest hope that this edition of the *Gītā* will be warmly welcomed and received by those interested in Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on it.

Janmāṣṭamī — PUBLISHER
Advaita Ashrama
19 August 1984

CONTENTS

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION

Sounds like

□	a	o in s*o*n
□	ā	a in m*a*ster
□	i	i in *i*f
□	ee	in f*ee*l
□	u	u in f*u*ll
□	ū	oo in b*oo*t
□	ṛ	somewhat between r and ri
□	e	a in ev*a*d
□	ai	y in m*y*
□	o	o in *o*ver
□	k	k
□	kh	ckh in blo*ckh*ead
□	g	g (hard)
□	gh	gh in log-*h*ut
□	ṅ	ng
□	v	ch (not k)
□	ch	chh in cat*ch* him
□	j	j
□	jh	dgeh in he*dgeh*og
□	ñ	n (somewhat)
□	ṭ	t
□	ṭh	th in an*t*-*h*ill
□	ḍ	d
□	ḍh	dh in go*dh*ood
□	ṇ	n in u*n*der
□	t	French t
□	th	th in *th*umb
□	d	d in *th*em
□	dh	theh in brea*the* here

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ā.Ā.	Ānanda Āshrama Edition
Ā.G.	Ānanda Giri
Āp.Dh.Sū.	pastamba-Dharma-Sūtras
Aṣṭ.	Aṣṭekar Edition
B. S.	Brahma-Sūtras
Bh.	Śrīmad Bhāgavatam
Bo. Sm.	Bodhāyana-Smṛti
Bṛ.	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
C.P.U.	A Concordance to the Principal Upaniṣads and Bhagavad-Gītā
C.W.	The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda
Ch.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
Gau. Sm.	Gautama-Smṛti
Gī. Pr.	Gītā Press (Gorakhpur) Edition
Īś.	Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad
Jā.	Jābāla Upaniṣad
Ka.	Kaṭha Upaniṣad
Kai.	Kaivalya Upaniṣad
Ke.	Kena Upaniṣad
M.S.	Madhusūdana Sarasvatī
Ma. Nā.	Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad
Ma. Sm.	Manu-Smṛti
Mbh. Āś.	Mahābhārata, Aśvamedhika-parva
Mbh. Śā.	Mahābhārata Śānti-parva
Mbh. St.	Mahābhārata Strī-parva
Mbh. Va.	Mahābhārata Vana-parva
Mu.	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
Nā. Par.	Nārada Parivrājaka Upaniṣad
Nā. Sū.	Nāsadīya-Sūkta
Nṛ. Pū.	Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpani Upaniṣad

Nṛ. Ut.	Nṛsimha-uttara-tāpani Upaniṣad
P.	Pañcadasī
P. Y. Sū.	Pātañjala-Yoga-Sūtras
Pr.	Praśna Upaniṣad
Pu. Sū.	Puruṣa-sūkta
Ṛg.	Ṛg-veda
Ś.	Śaṅkarānanda, Swāmī
Ś.S.	Śrīdhara Swāmī
Śa. Br.	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
Sṛ. Sū.	Sṛṣṭi-sūkta
Śv.	Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad
Tai. Ār.	Taittirīya Āraṇyaka
Tai. Br.	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa
Tai. Saṁ.	Taittirīya Saṁhitā
V.P.	Viṣṇu Purāṇa
V.S.A.	V.S. Apte (*A Sanskrit-English Dictionary)*
Yā.	Yājñikī Upaniṣad

INTRODUCTION

The scene of the delivery of the *Bhagavadgītā* (*The Song Divine*), also known briefly as the *Gītā*, by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna is laid on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra where the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas had assembled their armies for war. Scholars differ as regards the date of this battle, though they are inclined to think that it was a historical event. According to tradition, the battle was fought at the end of the Dvāpara-*yuga*. The next *yuga*, namely the Kali-*yuga*, is believed to have started on 18 February 3102 BC, when Parīkṣit, grandson of Arjuna, ascended the throne of the Kauravas at Hastināpura. (1) (*The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Vol. 1, p. 308.) Karandikar says that the battle was fought in 1931 BC, while Prof. Sengupta argues that it was fought in 2566 BC. C. V. Vaidya holds that the war was fought in 3102 BC.

As Dhṛtarāṣṭra was born blind, he could not rule the kingdom. So his younger brother Pāṇḍu became the Ruler. When Pāṇḍu died his sons were too young as also were Duryodhana, the eldest son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and his younger brothers. Hence Bhīṣma, the oldest member of the family, managed the affairs of the State. When the young boys came of age Duryodhana wanted to become the King by ousting Yudhiṣṭhira through foul means. But public opinion was in favour of Yudhiṣṭhira. So, in order not to antagonize the officials and the people, Bhīṣma advised Dhṛtarāṣṭra to divide the kingdom between his sons, referred to as the Kauravas, and Pāṇḍu's sons called the Pāṇḍavas. This advice was followed. Accordingly the former ruled from Hastināpura and the latter from Indraprastha for thirty-six years. But Duryodhana was jealous of the prosperity of the Pāṇḍavas, and to ruin them he invited Yudhiṣṭhira to a game of dice, which resulted in the banishment of the Pāṇḍavas under the condition of living in the forest for twelve years and one year incognito. After the stipulated period Yudhiṣṭhira claimed his portion of the kingdom, but Duryodhana refused, and this led to the battle of Kurukṣetra. Yudhiṣṭhira had four brothers—Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Arjuna was considered the mightiest among the contemporary warriors. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though Himself formidable warrior and regarded as an Incarnation of God, vowed not to take up arms on either side, but agreed to become the charioteer of Arjuna.

Through the political sagacity and able advice of Śrī Kṛṣṇa the result of the battle went in favour of Yudhiṣṭhira, who ascended the throne.

The battle is described in all its details in the great epic *Mahābhārata*. And the *Gītā* which forms chapters 23 to 40 of the Bhīṣmaparva of this epic must be as old; Radhakrishnan points out that the *Mahābhārata* contains references to the *Gītā*. (*Indian Philosophy,* Vol. 1, p. 523.) Scholars are at variance about the date of this voluminous epic. They ascribe to it a date much later than that of the battle, and opine that it underwent many additions and alterations in subsequent ages. According to them *Gītā* also suffered the same fate. R C Dutta thinks that the *Mahābhārata* was first written in the twelfth century BC. Bühler and Kriste in their book, *Contributions to the Study of the Mahābhārata* assign the present form of the epic to the third century AD. But according to Radhakrishnan the epic took its present form at least in the fifth century BC, whereas it might have been first written in the eleventh century BC. (Ibid p. 480.)

Some of the western thinkers were of the opinion that the *Gītā* was written after Jesus Christ and the idea of devotion was borrowed from him. But the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* remarks, 'It is now certain that portions of this poem, in which the doctrine of *bhakti*, or fervent faith, is taught, are pre-Christian, and therefore itself is of indigenous Indian origin.' (Vol. 6, p. 696.) Not merely the devotional portions but the book as a whole is not only pre-Christian, it is pre-Buddhistic as well.

That the *Gītā* is pre-Buddhistic follows from the fact that it does not refer to Buddhism. Some scholars believe that the mention of *nirvāṇa* six times in the *Gītā* is a clear indication of its post-Buddhistic origin. But the word *nirvāṇa* in the *Gītā* occurs compounded either with *brahma* as *brahma-nirvāṇam*—meaning identified with or absorbed in Brahman—, or with *paramām* as *nirvāṇa-paramām*, which means culminating in Liberation. The Buddhistic *nirvāṇa*, on the other hand, is used in the sense of being blown out or extinguished. This word also occurs elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata* in the sense of extinction. So, the conclusion is that the Buddhists borrowed the word *nirvāṇa* from the earlier Hindu literature. Furthermore, the construction of many sentences as also archaic forms of words in the *Gītā* does not follow the grammatical rules of Pāṇini (c. sixth

century BC.). Besides, the word yoga is used in the *Gītā* in a much wider sense than it is in the *Yoga-Sūtras* of Patañjali, who followed Pāṇini 100 or 150 years later. Telang is of the opinion that the *Gītā* was written earlier than 300 BC, while R J Bhandarkar holds that it must have been written earlier than the fourth century. (*Vaiśṇavism and Śaivism*, p. 13) Radhakrishnan, however, goes further backward to fifth century BC. According to Dr. Dasgupta it must have been composed earlier than Buddha's advent, but in no case later than that. Noticing the similarity of language among the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and the *Gītā*, some scholars have concluded that the *Gītā* belongs to the later Upaniṣadic age. In fact, the colophons in the *Gītā* mention that it is an Upaniṣad *(bhagavad gītāsu-upaniṣatsu).*

Though, as suggested by some scholars, Kṛṣṇa of the Ṛg-veda (8.96.13-15), (2) who lived on the banks of Aṁsumatī (Yamunā) and fought against Indra, might have been a tribal god, the Kṛṣṇa of the *Mahābhārata*, otherwise known as Vāsudeva (3) (son of Vasudeva and Devakī), must have been a historical person, (4) honoured as an incarnation of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa. Megasthenes (320 BC.), the Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, mentions that Heracles was worshipped by Sourasenoi (Śūrasenas) in whose land were two great cities—Methora (Mathurā) and Kleisobora (Kṛṣṇapura). Scholars identify Heracles (Harikuleśa) with Kṛṣṇa. The *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa* refers to Him as a descendant of Aṅgirasa (30.9), and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.17.6) says that Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, was taught by Ghora Āṅgirasa. Some scholars find a similarity between the teaching of Kṛṣṇa (*Gītā*, 16.1-3) with Ghora's teaching: 'Then, these that are austerity, charity, straightforwardness, non-injury, and truthfulness are the payments made to the priests' (Ch. 3.17.4). Besides Ghora's use of the word *yajña* (sacrifice) in a metaphorical sense finds its echo in the fourth chapter of the *Gītā (*verses 24–33*)*. Finally, Ghora's conclusion of his teaching with, 'At the time of final departure one should think, "Thou art the indestructible, Thou art the Immovable, Thou art the essence of the Vital Force"', has similarity with the verses 11 to 13 of the eighth chapter of the *Gītā*. (5) In time, Vāsudeva became the central figure of the Bhāgavata cult. His name is mentioned in Pāṇini's grammar (4.3.98). The Besnagar (Vidiśā) inscription (180 BC) mentions the erection

of a column with a Garuḍa's image on it, in honour of Vāsudeva by Heliodorous, a Bhāgavata and a resident of Taxila. In the Buddhist book *Niddeśa* (fourth century BC) included in the Pāli Canon, there is a reference to the worshippers of Vāsudeva and Baladeva among others. Old Jaina literature also refer to Kṛṣṇa (Kaṇha). All these facts go to prove that Kṛṣṇa was a pre-Buddhistic personality.

According to the recension of the *Gītā* commented on by Śaṅkarācārya, (6) the number of verses is 700. But there is evidence to show that some old manuscripts had 745 verses. The *Gītā* published in Srinagar, Kashmir, with the annotation of Abhinavaguptācārya, contains the same number of verses. Other manuscripts have been discovered with variations both in the number of verses and the readings. Pusalker is of the opinion that 'the additional stanzas effect no material addition; nor do they create any differences in the teaching or argument.' (*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, p. 144.) He further remarks that 'Śaṅkarācārya's testimony for the text of the *Bhagavadgītā* is earlier than that of any other MS or commentator.' (ibid. p. 147) However that may be, after Śaṅkarācārya wrote his Commentary, the *Gītā* has taken a definite form with 700 verses, so far at least as the general public is concerned.

The *Gītā* is ranked among the greatest religious books of the world, and in India it occupies a position next only to the Upaniṣads. In fact, it is considered as a summing up of the Upaniṣads; in certain places it quotes from them almost verbatim. There is a commonly known verse which says, 'All the Upaniṣads are cows, the milker is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the calf is Arjuna, the enjoyers are the wise ones and the milk is the fine nectar that the *Gītā* is.' The book has been translated into all the widely spoken languages in India as also into the principal languages of the world. As early as the time of Akbar (1556–1605) the book was translated into Persian separately by Abu-'l Fazl and Faizi.

About the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Vol. 8, pp. 937–8) writes: 'The influence of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* has been profound. It was a popular text open to all who would listen and fundamental for all later Hinduism.' (7)

The importance of the *Gītā* for the Hindu public is proved by the fact that almost all the religious leaders following Śaṅkarācārya (8) have interpreted the *Gītā* according to their own schools of thought. Among them Rāmānujācārya (eleventh century AD), Madhvācārya (1199–1276), Vallabhācārya (1479), Keśava Kāśmīrī, a follower of Nimbārkācārya (1162), Vijñāna Bhikṣu, Jñāneśwar and Tukārām wrote commentaries or elucidations on the *Gītā*. In modern times also, such annotations have been written by B. G. Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, and Śrī Aurobindo among others.

About the influence of the *Gītā* on other countries and religions Radhakrishnan writes, 'The *Gītā* has exercised an influence that extended in early times to China and Japan, and lately to the lands of the West. The two chief works of Mahāyāna Buddhism, *Mahāyāna-śraddhotpatti* (*The Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna)* and *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* (*The Lotus of the True Law)* are deeply indebted to the teaching of the *Gītā*. It is interesting to observe that the official exponent of the "German Faith", J W Hauer, a Sanskrit scholar who served for some years as a missionary in India, gives to the *Gītā* a central place in the German faith.' (*Bhagavadgītā*, p. 11.) Dara Shuko was enamoured of the *Gītā*. We have already indicated that the *Gītā* travelled to Persia during the Mughal Age. In recent times it has been appreciated by eminent men and scholars like Dr L D Barnett, Warren Hastings, Charles Wilkins (who translated *Gītā* into English in 1758), Carlyle and Aldous Huxley.

It is not necessary to present here the gist of the *Gītā*, for this will be apparent to those who read it as also the present translation. Suffice it to say that although many western scholars believe that the *Gītā* is a loose collection of thoughts of different schools, Madhusūdana Saraswati divides the *Gītā* into three sections of six chapters each, dealing successively with Karma-yoga, Bhakti-yoga, and Jñāna-yoga, the first leading to the second and the second to the third. But Ānanda Giri holds that the three sections are concerned with the ascertainment of the true meaning of the great Upaniṣadic saying, 'Thou art That'. His view has been presented in the footnotes of the present work. Śaṅkarācārya makes no such division, but says that spiritual unfoldment proceeds along the following stages: practice of scriptural rites and duties with a hankering for results; practice of the same as a dedication to God without expecting rewards for oneself;

purification of the mind or moral excellence along with *upāsanā (*devotion to and meditation on the qualified Brahman); acquisition of knowledge from a teacher and the scriptures, followed by renunciation of all rites and duties (monasticism), which makes one *fit* for steadfastness in that knowledge; steadfastness in that knowledge; removal of ignorance and self-revelation of the supreme Brahman, which is the same as Liberation. (See Śaṅkarācārya's Commentary on 5.12; his introduction to 5.27, 18.10; and Commentary on 18.46 and 18.49.) He thus reveals a unity of purpose of the book as a whole.

In the preparation of this book we have been helped by Swāmīs Gabhīrānanda and Ātmārāmānanda. In general, we have followed the Gītā Press (Gorakhpur) edition of the text and the commentary. Important variations in reading have been pointed out in the footnotes. Other footnotes on the text and the Commentary are based on Ānanda Giri, unless and otherwise stated.

31 August 1983 TRANSLATOR
(Janmāṣṭamī)

REFERENCES

[1] 'According to the Aihole inscription of Pulakeśin II (AD. 700) the Bhārata war took place in 3102 BC, which is the starting point of the Kali-*yuga* era according to the astronomical tradition represented by Āryabhaṭa. … Another school of Hindu Astronomers and Historians represented by Vṛddha-Garga, Varāhamihira and Kalhaṇa placed the Bhārata war 653 years after the Kali-*yuga* era, that is, in 2449 BC.' (Ibid. p. 272.). After discussing the point more thoroughly, the book concludes: 'We may therefore take c. 1400 BC as the provisional date for the Bhārata war, and the event must have taken place between this date and 1000 BC in round numbers.' (Ibid. p. 273.).

[2]Āṅgirasa Kṛṣṇa was also a *ṛṣi* (seer) of the Ṛg-vedic hymn 8.85.

[3] 'Vāsudeva is mentioned first in the *Taittirīya Araṇyaka*, 10.1.6, as a god together with Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu, apparently as mystically identical with them.' (H. Jacobi, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 7, p. 195.)

On the ground that though Balarāma (or Balabhadra) and Kṛṣṇa were brothers, the former was not called Vāsudeva, whereas the latter was, Jacobi concludes that in earlier days Vāsudeva considered as an incarnation was different from Kṛṣṇa, a Rajput chief, but later on they became identified in popular belief. But this is not convicting. For, though Pṛthā had three sons, Arjuna alone was called Pārtha. The sons of Pāṇḍu were as good Kauravas as Duryodhana and others, but the latter alone were called Kauravas. Daśaratha had four sons, but Rāma alone was called Dāśarathi.

[4] 'There is now a general consensus of opinion in favour of the historicity of Kṛṣṇa. Many also hold the view that Vāsudeva, the Yādava hero, the cowherd boy Kṛṣṇa in Gokula, the counsellor of the Pāṇḍavas and the great philosopher of the *Bhagavadgītā*, or in short, Kṛṣṇa of the Purāṇas and Kṛṣṇa of the *Mahābhārata* were one and the same person.' (*The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. 1, p. 303.)

[5] A.D. Pusalker denies the identity of Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* with Kṛṣṇa of the *Mahābhārata*. (*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas of India*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 57–8.) He argues that the Purāṇas mention Sāndīpani and Garga as the teachers of Kṛṣṇa, whereas the *Chāndogya* mentions Ghora Āṅgirasa as the teacher. But one may reply that Kṛṣṇa might have had all the three as His teachers in different stages of His life.

[6] According to Rajendranath Ghosh, Śaṅkarācārya was born in 686 AD and not in 788 AD as is held by some. (Introduction to *Śaṅkara-granthāvali*, Bengali, Vol. 1, p. 26.) Swāmī Tapasyānanda writes: 'It is held by the critics of the date (that is, 788 AD) that the Śaṅkara) of 788–820 AD is not Ādi Śaṅkara (the original Śaṅkara), but Abhinava Śaṅkara (modern Śaṅkara), another famous *sannyāsin* of later times

(788–839 AD), who was born at Chidambaram and was the head of the Śaṅkara Math at Kāñcīpuram between 801 and 839 AD … Most probably, he (Śaṅkara) must have lived somewhere between the fifth and the seventh century AD, certainly much earlier than the end of eighth century—his generally accepted date by modern scholars.' (Introduction to *Śaṅkara-digvijaya*, Ramakrishna Math, Madras, pp. xv-xxii.)

[7] A popular Sanskrit verse runs thus: 'The *Gītā* which issued out of the lotus-like mouth of Kṛṣṇa Himself should be well sung. What is the need of other voluminous scriptures?' The *Gītā* is a constituent of the threefold Canon (*Prasthāna-traya) of Hinduism,* the other two being the Upaniṣads and the *Brahma Sūtras.*

[8] Writers on the *Gītā* refer to an earlier gloss (*vṛtti*) by Bodhāyana, but this seems to be lost for ever. Bodhāyana, according to Ā.G., believed that neither Knowledge not action (rites and duties) can by itself bring about Liberation; a combination of both is necessary.

B H A G A V A D G Ī T Ā

INVOCATION & INTRODUCTION

ॐ नारायणः परोऽव्यक्तादण्डमव्यक्तसम्भवम् ।
अण्डस्यान्तस्त्विमे लोकाः सप्तद्वीपा च मेदिनी॥

Om! Nārāyaṇa is higher than the Unmanifest. The (Cosmic) Egg comes out of the Unmanifest. All these worlds, including the earth with its seven islands, are in the Egg. (1)

After projecting this world, and desiring to ensure its stability, He, the Lord, first created the Prajāpatis, (2) namely Marīci and others, and made them follow the dharma (virtuous path) characterized by action (rites and duties) (3) as revealed in the Vedas. And then, having created others, namely, Sanaka, Sanandana, etc., He made them espouse the dharma characterized by renunciation and distinguished by Knowledge and detachment. (4) For, the dharma revealed in the Vedas is of two kinds—one characterized by action, and the other by renunciation. That dharma, which is meant for the stability of the world and is the direct means to both secular and spiritual welfare of living beings, continues to be followed by Brāhmaṇas and others belonging to different castes and stages of life, (5) who aspire after the highest.

When, after a long time, dharma became overpowered by adharma (vice), and adharma increased owing to the deterioration of discriminative knowledge, caused by the rise of desire in the minds of the followers (of this dharma), then, as tradition goes, Viṣṇu, called Nārāyaṇa, the Prime Mover, took birth—as a part (6) of Himself—as Kṛṣṇa, (7) the son of Devaki by Vasudeva, for the protection of Brāhminhood which is Brahman manifest on earth, and for ensuring the stability of the world. Because, when Brāhminhood is preserved the Vedic dharma becomes well guarded, for the distinctions among castes and stages of life depend on it.

And He, the Lord, ever endowed with Knowledge, Sovereignty, Power, Strength, (8) Valour and Formidability, (9) exercises His command over His own Māyā which naturally belongs to (Him as) Viṣṇu, (10) and which goes

by the name Primal Nature, (11) consisting of its three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*), and as such, through His own Māyā, He appears as if embodied, as if born, and as if (12) favouring people—though by His nature, He is birthless, changeless, the Lord of all creatures, eternal, pure, conscious and free. (13)

Although He had no need for Himself, still for the sake of favouring the creatures, He imparted that very two-fold Vedic dharma to Arjuna who had sunk into the sea of sorrow and delusion, with the idea that the dharma would surely propagate if it is accepted and put into practice by people who are endowed with an abundance of good qualities. Vedavyāsa, (14) who was omniscient and possessed of godly qualities, (15) set forth in seven hundred verses under the name *Gītā*, that dharma as it was instructed by the Lord. This scripture called the *Gītā*, which is such, is the collection of the quintessence of all the teachings of the Vedas, and its meaning is difficult to understand. Finding that although its words, meaning of words, meaning of sentences, and arguments (16) have been expounded by many for the sake of discovering its import, still because of the multiplicity and extreme contradictoriness of the expositions it is not comprehended by people, I shall explain it briefly with a view to determining its meaning distinctly.

Of that scripture, viz the *Gītā* which is such, the highest purpose, stated briefly, is Liberation characterized by the complete cessation of transmigration together with its causes. And that results from the dharma (virtuous path) consisting in steady adherence to Knowledge of the Self, preceded by renunciation of all rites and duties. Thus, having in mind this very dharma (virtuous path) to be the purport of the *Gītā*, it has been said by the Lord Himself in the *Anugītā*, 'That very virtuous path is quite adequate for the realization of the state of Brahman' (17) (Mbh. Aś. 16.12). Moreover, there itself it has been further said, 'One who is neither a follower of virtue, nor even of vice,' and indeed, not even engaged in good and bad; 'He who remains absorbed in the same posture, (18) silent, (19) and without thinking of anything' (20) (op. cit. 19.1, 7). It has also been said, 'Knowledge is distinguished by renunciation' (21) (op. cit. 43.25). Here (in the *Gītā*) as well, at the end it has been said to Arjuna, 'Abandoning all forms of rites and duties, (22) take refuge in Me alone' (18.66).

That dharma, characterized by action and enjoined for different castes and stages of life, even though it is meant for achieving prosperity and attaining heaven etc., yet, when performed with the attitude of dedication to God and without hankering for (selfish) results, leads to the purification of the internal organ. (23) And, in the case of a person with a purified internal organ it becomes the cause even of final Liberation, by becoming the means for the attainment of fitness for steady adherence to Knowledge (*jñānaniṣṭhā)* and the cause of rise of Knowledge. Thus also, having this very meaning in view (24) (the Lord) will say, 'Dedicating actions (rites and duties) to Brahman (God) …' (5.10); 'Giving up attachment, the yogīs undertake work (rites and duties) …for the purification of oneself (of their hearts)' (ibid. 11).

This scripture, viz the *Gītā*, while particularly revealing the two-fold dharma having Liberation as its goal and the supreme Reality, Brahman, called Vāsudeva, as its subject-matter, comes to have a special purpose (*prayojana*), relationship (*saṁbandha*), (25) and subject-matter (*viṣaya*). Since from a clear knowledge of its purport all the human ends become fulfilled, therefore an effort is being made by me to expound it.

REFERENCES

[1] It is a custom among Sanskrit writers to start their works auspiciously by invoking, saluting, or praying to their Chosen Deities, for the unhindered completion of their compositions. Pursuant to this tradition, Śaṅkarācārya quotes a verse from a Smṛti. Thereby he indirectly admits that Smṛtis like the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Bhagavadgītā*, etc. as well as Histories like the *Mahābhārata* are valid sources of spiritual knowledge.—Tr.

The name Nārāyaṇa is derived by the combination of two words, *nāra* and *ayana*, of which the former means those that are associated with *nara* and the latter means their goal. *Nara* refers to all the bodies, both moving and non-moving, and *nāra* stands for the individual souls, the reflections of the supreme Consciousness which remain in association with those bodies. Being the substratum of

souls, their Ordainer and Inner Controller, the supreme Being or supreme Consciousness is called Nārāyaṇa. From the phenomenal point of view, the supreme Being (Brahman) is called God, who is associated with Māyā and possessed of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

The Unmanifest stands for Māyā, which is referred to in the *Gītā* as *akṣara*, the immutable (15.16; Mu. 2.1.2). So, by saying, 'Nārāyaṇa is higher than the Unmanifest', the text means that Nārāyaṇa is none other than the transcendental Brahman.

The *Egg* refers to the principle of Hiraṇyagarbha, whose body is constituted by the five elements (namely earth, water, fire, air, and space, in their subtlest forms) that emerge from the Unmanifest.

'All these worlds,' and, so on refer to the body of Virāṭ, which is made up of the five elements in their gross, compounded forms.

Traditionally, the commentators on scriptures clearly state their *anubandha-catuṣṭaya* (four unifying factors)—*adhikārī (*eligible person), *viṣaya* (subject-matter), *saṁbandha* (relationship between the eligible person and the subject-matter), and *prayojana (*purpose); but where this has not been done, the annotator has to point them out. Thus, according to Ā.G. the *subject-matter* here is the identity of the individual souls with the transcendental Brahman referred to by the word Nārāyaṇa. The individual souls hankering for Liberation are the *persons eligible* to pursue this subject. The *relationship* is that existing between this *subject-matter* and the *eligible persons.* The *relationship* can be of other kinds as well, like that between ends and means. The *purpose* is implied by the words, 'higher than the Unmanifest', which, by figure of speech, indicates that an eligible person goes beyond Māyā through the knowledge of the transcendental Brahman.

[2] Prajāpati literally means the Master, Lord, or Progenitor of creatures. Virāṭ is sometimes referred to as Prajāpati. The Purānas also state that from Virāṭ issued Brahmā, Viṣnu, and Śiva. Brahmā is also

called Prajāpati. From him issued Marīci, Dakṣa, Manu, and others, who too are called Prajāpatis; each of them rule over the world for certain fixed periods called *manvantara* (4,320,000 human years).—Tr.

[3] Such as sacrifices, charities, etc.

[4] It has been stated that the primary subject-matter of the *Gītā* is the Lord Himself. The secondary subject-matter consists of the Path of Renunciation and the Path of Activity as revealed in the Vedas.

[5] The four castes are Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. And the persons in the four stages of life are Celibates, Householders, those who repair to the forests (that is, leave home) (anchorites), and Mendicants.—Tr.

[6] That is, in His form created according to His will, with the help of his power called Māyā.

[7] This is according to the Aṣṭ, and Gī. Pr.; A.A. omits this word.—Tr.

[8] *Power* of maintaining His sovereignty; *Strength*: all accessories helpful in maintaining His Power.

[9] Since God is ever in possession of the six qualities (Knowledge etc.), therefore, even as an Incarnation He remains unsurpassable.

[10] Literally, one who permeates everything.

[11] Ā.Ā. omits *mūla* (Primal).—Tr.

[12] This is according to Gī. Pr. and Ā.Ā.; Aṣṭ. omits *iva* (as if).—Tr.

[13] *Eternal*: devoid of transformations; *pure*: devoid of a cause; *conscious*: not inert; *free*: free from ignorance, desire, and action.

[14] Also known as Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana. There is a Smṛti text, 'know Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana, that is Vyāsa, as the Lord Nārāyaṇa', which shows that Vyāsa was an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

[15] A Sanskrit verse defines *bhagavān* thus: 'He is spoken of as Bhagavān who is aware of creation and dissolution, future prosperity and

adversity, ignorance and Illumination of all beings' (V.P. 6.5.78. Also see p. 141).

[16] *Words*: separation of each word from the others; *meanings of words*: determining the meanings by expounding the compound words; *arguments*: meeting objections, and stating one's own conclusions.

[17] That is, for absolute Liberation through identity with Brahman.

[18] That is, Absorbed in the absolute Brahman, accepting That as the ultimate Goal.

[19] That is, without any activity of the external organs.

[20] That is, without any activity of the internal organ.

[21] Knowledge, which follows renunciation of all rites and duties, leads to Liberation.

[22] All rites and duties prescribed by scriptures or sanctioned by society, as well as those opposed to them, that is, adharma.

[23] Consisting of *citta* (mindstuff), *buddhi* (intellect), *manas* (mind), and *ahaṅkāra* (ego).

[24] A.A. omits 'having … in view'.—Tr.

[25] *Relationship* between Liberation, *karma-niṣṭhā* (adherence to rites and duties) and *jñāna-niṣṭhā* (steadfastness in Knowledge), the latter two leading to the former. See also note 1 on p. 1.—Tr.

CHAPTER 1

THE MELANCHOLY OF ARJUNA

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय॥१॥

1. O Sañjaya, what did my sons (and others) and Pāṇḍu's sons (and others) actually do when, eager for battle, they assembled on the sacred field, the Kurukṣetra (Field of the Kurus)? (1)

Sañjaya said:

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत्॥२॥

2. But then, seeing the army of the Pāṇḍavas in battle array, King Duryodhana approached the teacher (Droṇa) and uttered a speech: (2)

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम्।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता॥३॥

3. O teacher, (please) see this vast army of the sons of Pāṇḍu, arrayed for battle by the son of Drupada, your intelligent disciple. (3)

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः॥४॥

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान्।
पुरुजित् कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः॥५॥

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान्।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः॥६॥

4. Here are the heroes wielding great bows, who in battle are compeers of Bhīma and Arjuna: Yuyudhāna (Sātyaki) and Virāṭa, and the *mahāratha*

(great chariot-rider) Drupada;

5. Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna and the valiant king of Kāśi (Vārāṇasī); Purujit and Kuntibhoja, and Śaibya, the choicest among men;

6. And the chivalrous Yudhāmanyu, and the valiant Uttamaujas; son of Subhadrā (Abhimanyu) and the sons of Draupadī—all (of whom) are, verily, *mahārathas*. (4)

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान् ब्रवीमि ते॥७॥

7. But, O best among the Brāhmaṇas, please be appraised of those who are foremost among us, the commanders of my army. I speak of them to you by way of example. (5)

भवान् भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिञ्जयः।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिर्जयद्रथः॥८॥

8. (They are:) Your venerable self, Bhīṣma and Karṇa, and Kṛpa, who is ever victorious in battle; Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa, Saumadatti, and Jayadratha. (6)

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः॥९॥

9. There are many other heroes also who have dedicated their lives for my sake, who possess various kinds of weapons and missiles, (and) all of whom are skilled in battle. (7)

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम्।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतएषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम्॥१०॥

10. Therefore, our army under the complete protection of Bhīṣma, and others is unlimited. But this army of these (enemies), under the protection of Bhīma and others is limited. (8)

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि॥११॥

11. However, venerable sirs, all of you without exception, while occupying all the positions in the different directions as allotted (to you respectively), please fully protect Bhīṣma in particular. (9)

तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान्॥१२॥

12. The valiant grandfather, the eldest of the Kurus, loudly sounding a lion-roar, blew the conch to raise his (Duryodhana's) spirits. (10)

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत्॥१३॥

13. Just immediately after that conchs and kettle-drums, and tabors, trumpets and cow-horns blared forth. That sound became tumultuous.

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः॥१४॥

14. Then, Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa) and the son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna), stationed in their magnificent chariot with white horses yoked to it, loudly blew their divine conchs. (11)

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः॥१५॥

15. Hṛṣīkeśa (Kṛṣṇa) (blew the conch) Pāñcajanya; Dhanañjaya (Arjuna) (the conch) Devadatta; and Vṛkodara (Bhīma) of terrible deeds blew the great conch Pauṇḍra; (12)

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ॥१६॥

16. King Yudhiṣṭhira, son of Kuntī, (blew) the Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva, the Sughoṣa and the Maṇipuṣpaka (respectively). (13)

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः॥१७॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते।

सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक् पृथक्॥१८॥

17. And the King of Kāśi, wielding a great bow, and the great charioteer Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Virāṭa, and Sātyaki the unconquered;

18. Drupada and the sons of Draupadī, and the son of Subhadrā, (Abhimanyu) the mighty-armed—all (of them) together, O King, blew their respective conchs. (14)

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत्।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलोऽभ्यनुनादयन्॥१९॥

19. That tremendous sound pierced the hearts of the associates of Dhṛtarāṣṭra as it reverberated through the sky and the earth. (15)

अथ व्यवस्थितान् दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपिध्वजः।

प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते॥२०॥

20. O King, thereafter, seeing Dhṛtarāṣṭra's men standing in their positions, when all the weapons were ready for action, the son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna) who had the insignia of Hanumān on his chariot-flag, raising up his bow, said the following to Hṛṣīkeśa. (16)

Arjuna said:

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत॥२१॥

21. O Acyuta, please place my chariot between both the armies—. (17)

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान्।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्रणसमुद्यमे॥२२॥

22. —until I survey these who stand intent on fighting, and those who are going to engage in battle with me in this impending war. (18)

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः॥२३॥

23. These who have assembled here and want to accomplish in the war what is dear to the perverted son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, I find them to be intent on fighting.

Sañjaya said:

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम्॥२४॥

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखत: सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम्।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान् कुरूनिति॥२५॥

24–5. O scion of the line of Bharata (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), Hṛṣīkeśa, on being told so by Guḍākeśa (Arjuna), placed the excellent chariot between the two armies, in front of Bhīṣma and Droṇa as also all the rulers of the earth, and said, 'O Pārtha (Arjuna), see these assembled people of the Kuru (19) dynasty.' (20)

तत्रापश्यत् स्थितान् पार्थ पितृनथ पितामहान्।
आचार्यान् मातुलान् भ्रातृन् पुत्रान् पौत्रान् सखींस्तथा।
श्वशुरान् सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि॥२६॥

26. Then Pārtha (Arjuna) saw, marshalled among both the armies, (his) uncles as also grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers (and cousins), sons, grandsons, as well as comrades and fathers-in-law and friends.

तान् समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेय: सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान्।
कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत्॥२७॥

27. The son of Kuntī (Arjuna), seeing all those relatives arrayed (there), became overwhelmed by supreme compassion and said this sorrowfully:

Arjuna said:

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम्।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति॥२८॥

28. O Kṛṣṇa, seeing these relatives and friends who have assembled here with the intention of fighting, my limbs become languid and my mouth becomes completely dry. (21)

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते।
गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक् चैव परिदह्यते॥२९॥

29. And there is trembling in my body, and there is horripillation; the Gāṇḍīva (bow) slips from the hand and even the skin burns intensely. (22)

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः।
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव॥३०॥

30. Moreover, O Keśava (Kṛṣṇa), I am not able to stand firmly, and my mind seems to be whirling. And I notice the omens to be adverse. (23)

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे।
न कांक्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च॥३१॥

31. Besides, I do not see any good (to be derived) from killing my own people in battle. O Kṛṣṇa, I do not hanker after victory, nor even a kingdom nor pleasures. (24)

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा।
येषामर्थे कांक्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च॥३२॥

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च।
आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः॥३३॥

मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा॥३४॥

32–4. O Govinda! What need do we have of a kingdom, or what (need) of enjoyments and livelihood? Those for whom kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures are desired by us, namely, teachers, uncles, sons, and so also grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law as also relatives—those very ones stand arrayed for battle risking their lives and wealth. (25)

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन।

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते॥३५॥

35. O Madhusūdana, even if I am killed, I do not want to kill these even for the sake of a kingdom extending over the three worlds; what to speak of doing so for the earth! (26)

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन।
पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः॥३६॥

36. O Janārdana, what happiness shall we derive by killing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra? Sin alone will accrue to us by killing these felons. (27)

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान् स्वबान्धवान्।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव॥३७॥

37. Therefore, it is not proper for us to kill the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra who are our own relatives. For, O Mādhava, how can we be happy by killing our kinsmen? (28)

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम्॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम्।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ।३९॥

38–9. O Janārdana, although these people, whose hearts have become perverted by greed, do not see the evil arising from destroying the family and sin in hostility towards friends, yet how can we who clearly see the evil arising from destroying the family remain unaware of (the need of) abstaining from this sin? (29)

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत॥४०॥

40. From the ruin of the family are totally destroyed the traditional rites and duties of the family. When rites and duties are destroyed, vice overpowers the entire family also.

अधर्माभिभवात् कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः।

स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः॥४१॥

41. O Kṛṣṇa, when vice predominates, the women of the family become corrupt. O descendant of the Vṛṣṇis, when women become corrupted, it results in the intermingling of castes. (30)

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः॥४२॥

42. And the intermingling in the family leads the ruiners of the family verily into hell. The forefathers of these fall down (into hell) because of being deprived of the offerings of rice-balls and water. (31)

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकै :।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः॥४३॥

43. Due to these misdeeds of the ruiners of the family, which cause intermingling of castes, the traditional rites and duties of the castes and families are destroyed.

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन।
नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम॥४४॥

44. O Janārdana, we have heard it said that living in hell becomes inevitable for those persons whose family duties get destroyed.

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम्।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः॥४५॥

45. What a pity that we have resolved to commit a great sin by being eager to kill our own kith and kin out of greed for the pleasures of a kingdom!

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत्॥४६॥

46. If, in this battle, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra armed with weapons kill me who am non-resistant and unarmed, that will be more beneficial to me. (32)

Sañjaya said:

एवमुक्त्वाऽर्जुन: संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानस: ॥ ४७ ॥

47. Having said so, Arjuna, with a mind afflicted with sorrow, sat down on the chariot in the midst of the battle, casting aside the bow along with the arrows.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] (Notes on this chapter and on verses 1 to 10 of Chapter 2 are mostly based on M.S. unless otherwise mentioned.)

Sañjaya: Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was eager to find his own sons victorious, was doubtful whether the battle would be fought at all, and that, if fought, his sons would win. And so, (being himself blind) he wanted to know the actual position from Sañjaya. Derivatively *sañjaya* means one who has completely conquered such defects as attachment, repulsion, etc. Hence, by addressing him by that name, Dhṛtarāṣṭra expected Sañjaya to give an unprejudiced report.

My sons … etc.: Duryodhana and others, and Yudhiṣṭhira and others.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra being the elder surviving brother of Pāṇḍu was expected to be affectionate towards both his own and Pāṇḍu’s sons. But the use of *my* indicates that he was not impartial.

Dharmakṣetra: The sacred field which helps the growth of and generates ideas about dharma.

In the *Jābāla Upaniṣad* it is said: ‘Kurukṣetra is for the gods the resort of the gods; and for all the creatures it is the abode of Brahman, place of Liberation, salvation’ (1). In the *Śatapatha*

Brāḥmaṇa, too, we have: ‘Kurukṣetra is indeed the place of sacrifices to the gods.’

What did (they) actually do: Dhṛtarāṣṭra was under the impression that Yudhiṣṭhira and others, being virtuous, would at the last moment refrain from the battle; and this possibility was greater because of the traditional sacredness of Kurukṣetra. On the other hand, again, his sons might become afraid of the vast army under Bhīma and Arjuna, and withdraw from the battle. There was also the possibility of the sacred Kurukṣetra exerting its influence on his vicious sons, and then there would neither be battle nor victory. Thus, though the two parties were eager for battle, it might not be waged at all.

[2] *But*: This word indicates that there was no question of fear in the hearts of the Pāṇḍavas on seeing the Kaurava army; on the contrary, Duryodhana was struck with fear (—Ā.G.). M.S. says that this word conveys the idea that, as evident from the following conversation between Duryodhana and his teacher Droṇa, the former was too wicked to be influenced in the least by the sacred field of the Kurus to repent for his misdeeds against the Pāṇḍavas, and withdraw from the war. Besides, as a consequence, Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s anticipations were belied because the battle was actually fought.

Then: when the battle was imminent.

King: The word indicates that Duryodhana was shrewd and diplomatic as any king could be expected to be!

Approached the teacher: Droṇa was the teacher of archery both to the Pāṇḍavas and the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Kauravas). Duryodhana’s approaching the teacher signifies that though he was mentally disturbed by seeing the vast army of the Pāṇḍavas, he wanted to hide this feeling under the pretext of showing respect to the teacher!

Uttered a speech: Though the Sanskrit word *abravīt*, literally said, is enough, its cognate use with *vacanam*, speech, implies that his

speech had some hidden motive, or that Duryodhana merely uttered a few words but did not make his intentions clear.

[3] *Camū, vast army*: Technically it is a division of an army consisting of 729 elephants, as many chariots, 2,187 horses, and 3,645 soldiers. —Tr.

Please see this: Suspecting that Droṇa had tender feelings for his beloved disciples, the Pāṇḍavas, and might not exert himself fully, the shrewd Duryodhana wanted to enrage him against them by pointing out that they had arrayed themselves opposite to him irrespective of his being their teacher.—Ā.G.

Disciple: The word implies that Droṇa need have no fear of the vast army of the Pāṇḍavas, because it was led by one of his disciples. And he as a teacher was surely mightier than the disciple.

Son of Drupada: His name was Dhṛṣṭadyumna. But Duryodhana refers to him as the son of Drupada in order to enrage Droṇa further, Drupada being the latter's sworn enemy.

Intelligent: Therefore he cannot be ignored, though a disciple.

'Besides, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, though a son of your enemy, was so intelligent that he managed to learn archery from you. So, your carelessness has become the cause of my distress.'

Of the sons of Pāṇḍu: Instead of being construed with the word 'army', these words can be alternatively connected with 'O teacher'. In that case the shrewd words of Duryodhana will mean that he was taunting Droṇa of being the teacher of the Pāṇḍavas whom he favoured, and not of himself!

[4] *Sons of Draupadi*: namely, Prativindhya, Śrutakīrti, Śrutasoma, Śatānīka and Śrutasena.

All of them … mahārathas: Therefore they are not to be taken lightly.—Ā.G.

The commanders of the armies were classed as: i. *Mahāratha*—one who was proficient in the science of arms, and could fight single-handed ten thousand archers; ii. *Atiratha*—one who could fight innumerable (but less than ten thousand) archers; iii. *Ratha*—one who could fight a thousand warriors; and iv. *Ardha-ratha*—one who could fight only a lesser number of warriors. *Mahāratha* in verse 6 includes *atirathas* as well.

[5] *But*: Beginning with this word, Duryodhana starts enumerating his own commanders in order to hide his fear at the sight of the Pāṇḍava army. Thereby he exposes his own audacity.—Ā.G.

Dvijottama (O best among the Brāhmaṇas): This word suggests that among all the four castes Droṇa was the foremost, and as such he knew everything even without being told.

By way of example: suggesting that there were many others as well.—Ā.G.

[6] *Aśvatthāmā*, son of Droṇa: Mention of Aśvatthāmā before Karṇa's son Vikarṇa, and others, as also the mention of Droṇa before Bhīṣma and others, was for pleasing Droṇa!

Saumadatti: King of Balhikā (of Punjab), son of Somadatta; known also as Bhūriśravā because of his preeminence. *Jayadratha*: (some editions read *tathaivaca* in place of *jayadrathaḥ)* King of Sindhu (modern Sindh). The first line of the verse enumerates the four principal leaders; the second line names those next in status.

[7] *Many other heroes*: Śalya, Kṛtavarmā, and others.

Skilled: Not only do they have many weapons, but they also know how to use them.—Ā.G.

[8] *Therefore*: Because it is led by such great leaders as Bhīṣma and others.

Unlimited: Duryodhana's army consisted of eleven *akṣauhiṇīs*, and the Pāṇḍavas had only seven *akṣauhiṇīs*. (An *akṣauhinī*

consisted of 21,870 chariots, as many elephants, 65,610 horses, and 1,09,350 foot-soldiers.—V.S.A.)

[9] *However*: ‘Though our army is unlimited and adequate, still. . . .’

In a battle formation the Commander-in-chief used to remain in the centre. Other commanders, according to their ranks, were placed in various positions called *ayanas*, in different directions—east, west, and so on.

[10] Being eldest of the Kurus it was easy for Bhīṣma to understand that Duryodhana was secretly afraid and had therefore approached Droṇa, who, however, did not even utter a word because he was offended by Duryodhana’s diplomacy even at such a critical moment. Yet, as Duryodhana’s grandfather, Bhīṣma could not let him down. Hence he had to cheer him up.

Grandfather: Bhīṣma was actually the stepbrother of Vicitravīrya, the father of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu.

[11] *Magnificent*: This magnificent and formidable chariot was gifted by Fire at the time of burning the Khāṇḍava forest.

These and the following verses show that the Pāṇḍavas were not scared by the tumultuous din raised by the Kaurava army to frighten them.

[12] By naming the conchs Sañjaya implied that, since the Pāṇḍavas had so many conchs well known by their names, while Duryodhana’s army did not have any of that class, therefore the Pāṇḍava army had greater excellence.

Hṛṣīkeśa: The word derivatively means ‘the lord of the organs’, and therefore, as God He is the inner controller and succour of the Pāṇḍavas.

Dhanañjaya: Derivatively this means ‘a conqueror of wealth’. Before Yudhiṣṭhira’s being installed as King, Arjuna had gone out

for subjugating various kings and gathering wealth. And as such, he was not vanquishable.

Vṛkodara of terrible deeds: He had to his credit such terrible deeds as killing Hiḍimba. And being *vṛkodara*, wolf-bellied, he could digest a lot and thus was very strong.

[13] *Son of Kuntī*: This suggests that Yudhiṣṭhira was a virtuous person, born after severe austerities by his mother.

King: After performing the Rājasūya-sacrifice he became an Emperor.

Yudhiṣṭhira: The derivative meaning of this word is 'one who remains firm (unperturbed) in battle'. So, the implication is that he would remain firm in victory, that is, his victory was assured.

[14] *Unconquerable*: As in such fights as that with the demon Bāṇa, as also that with the gods when he fetched the Pārijāta flower from heaven.

[15] Although the sound arising from both the armies was equally tumultuous, it shook the army of Duryodhana alone, but not of his enemy.

[16] *Hanumān*: The famous monkey of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Hṛṣīkeśa: (See note under verse 15.) Arjuna had placed himself under Kṛṣṇa for direction, and did not act wilfully as Duryodhana did.

[17] *Acyuta*: One who remains unaffected by time, space, and causation.

[18] *Until (yāvat)*: Alternatively, *yāvat* may convey the idea, 'place my chariot *that far* in the middle from where I can survey.…'

The word *saha*, with, can also be construed with *kaiḥ*, in which case the translation will be: '… and those with whom the battle is to be fought by me'.

[19] *Kuru*: The Pāṇḍavas belonged to the Kuru dynasty. But somehow Duryodhana and others are referred to as the Kauravas, and Pāṇḍu's sons as the Pāṇḍavas.—Tr.

[20] *Scion of the line of Bharata*: By such an address Sañjaya implied that since Dhṛtarāṣṭra belonged to an illustrious dynasty, he should behave more justly towards the Pāṇḍavas.

Guḍākeśa, master of sleep: Being so, he was ever alert.

Pārtha: son of Pṛthā, otherwise known as Kuntī, who was the sister of Vasudeva. By mentioning this close relationship the Lord was assuring Arjuna of His safe charioteership and of doing what was best for him.

[21] *Completely*: This is indicative of the whole body being affected by the thought of having to kill and being killed.

[22] *Gāṇḍīva*: name of the bow used by Arjuna.

Arjuna's sorrow is illustrated in the earlier verse and the first line of the present verse. The second line of this verse illustrates his fear. Both these feelings arose from his ignorance about the real nature of the Self.—Ā.G.

[23] *Keśava*: The derivative meaning of this name is: *Ka* means Brahmā, the God of creation; *īśa* means Rudra, the God of destruction; He who, out of His compassion, moves towards them, *vāti*, that is, imparts power to them, is *Keśava*. Or, He who has killed such demons as Keśī is *Keśava*. By addressing Kṛṣṇa with this name, Arjuna meant that though he himself was sunk in sorrow and delusion, Kṛṣṇa was above all these, and so he could save Arjuna from his distress.

This verse illustrates Arjuna's delusion as well. —Ā.G.

[24] *Good*: Any good, seen or unseen.

From *killing … people*: In this context there is a verse:

Dvāvimau puruṣau loke sūrya-maṇḍala-bhedinau;

parivrāḍ yoga-yuktaśca raṇe cābhimukho hataḥ.

'There are two persons in this world who go beyond the Solar Orb to heaven—the mendicant engaged in Yoga and the man killed in battle while facing the enemy.'

This verse presents a result for the man killed in battle, but not for the killer. So, if nothing good results from killing an unrelated enemy, much less can be expected from killing one's own relatives. (Hence Arjuna argues, 'I do not see any good…' etc.)

I do not hanker after…: The first line of the verse may refer to the intangible (unseen) result (namely heaven); the second line refers to tangible results (namely kingdom, empire, etc.)

[25] *Govinda*: Literally it means, He who, being their presiding deity, is aware of the activities of the organs. As such, Arjuna implied that Kṛṣṇa, addressed here as *Govinda*, was already aware of his detachment from mundane goals.

Those for whom: Enjoyment becomes complete when shared with one's dear friends and relatives. But, if they are all killed, securing enjoyments becomes pointless.—Tr.

Pleasures: Since *enjoyment* itself implies pleasure, the use of the word *pleasure* again, stands for the *means* of pleasure.

Risking: The literal translation should have been, 'giving up their lives and wealth'; but this is not factually correct. They were only risking their wealth and lives.—Tr.

[26] *Want*: 'I do not even wish to kill, what to speak of actually doing so!'

Madhusūdana: By using this name Arjuna meant that, He, being the founder of the Vedic Path, should not urge Arjuna to undertake an

un-Vedic war.

[27] *Janārdana*: Literally, one who afflicts creatures. By addressing Kṛṣṇa thus, Arjuna hinted that, since killing of relatives was sinful in his case, therefore, if they are to be killed at all, it should be done by Kṛṣṇa Himself, for no sin accrues to Him even when He destroys the whole world at the time of cosmic dissolution.

Felon, *ātatāyin*: He is one who sets fire to the house of, administers poison to, falls upon with a sword on, steals the wealth, land and wife of, another person:

Cf. *Agnido garadaścaiva śastra-pāṇir-dhanāpahaḥ*

Kṣetra-dārāpahārī ca ṣaḍete ātatāyinaḥ.

Duryodhana and his accomplices had committed all these atrocities against the Pāṇḍavas, and it would not have been sinful to kill them. But Arjuna argues that though this is valid, still they were relatives, and killing of relatives is a sinful act.

Sin alone and nothing better will accrue. The killing of a felon is enjoined in books on Politics (Artha-śāstra), whereas non-injury is enjoined by scriptures on Ethics (Dharma-śāstra), and the latter are more authoritative than the former. Arjuna wants to follow the latter!

[28] *Mādhava*: Literally, husband of Lakṣmī, the Goddess of fortune, prosperity, and beauty. 'Being so, You should not urge me into an unholy war.'

[29] *Evil*: The sin arising from destroying one's own family and hostility towards friends.—Ā.G.

[30] When men become vicious, women may argue that they can also tread the same path.

[31] *Deprived*…, owing to the absence of legitimate sons, who alone are competent to offer obsequial oblations. —Ā.G.

[32] Because non-injury is a virtue superior to defending oneself. —Ā.G.

CHAPTER 2

THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

Sañjaya said:

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः॥१॥

1. To him who had been thus filled with pity, whose eyes were filled with tears and showed distress, and who was sorrowing, Madhusūdana uttered these words:

The Blessed Lord said:

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन॥२॥

2. O Arjuna, in this perilous place, whence has come to you this impurity entertained by unenlightened persons, which does not lead to heaven and which brings infamy? (1)

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप॥३॥

3. O Pārtha, yield not to unmanliness. This does not befit you. O scorcher of foes, arise, giving up the petty weakness of the heart.

Arjuna said:

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन।
F<egefYe: ØeefleÙeeslmÙeeefce
hetpeene&Jeefjmetove॥4॥

4. O Madhusūdana, O destroyer of enemies, how can I fight with arrows in battle against Bhīṣma and Droṇa who are worthy of adoration? (2)

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।

हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान्॥५॥

5. Rather than killing the noble-minded elders, it is better in this world to live even on alms. But by killing the elders, we shall only be enjoying here the pleasures of wealth and desirable things drenched in blood. (3)

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-
स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः॥६॥

6. We do not know this as well as to which is the better for us, (and) whether we shall win, or whether they shall conquer us. Those very sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, by killing whom we do not wish to live, stand in confrontation. (4)

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वा धर्मसम्मूढचेताः।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्॥७॥

7. With my nature overpowered by weak commiseration, with a mind bewildered about duty, I supplicate You. Tell me for certain that which is better; I am Your disciple. Instruct me who have taken refuge in You. (5)

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद्
यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम्।
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम्॥८॥

8. Because, I do not see that which can, even after acquiring on this earth a prosperous kingdom free from enemies and even sovereignty over the gods, remove my sorrow (which is) blasting the senses. (6)

Sañjaya said:

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तपः।

न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह॥९॥

9. Having spoken thus to Hṛṣīkeśa (Kṛṣṇa), Guḍākeśa, (Arjuna), the afflictor of foes, verily became silent, telling Govinda, 'I shall not fight.'

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः॥१०॥

10. O descendant of Bharata, to him who was sorrowing between the two armies, Hṛṣīkeśa, mocking as it were, said these words: (7)

And here, the text commencing from 'But seeing the army of the Pāṇḍavas' (1.2) and ending with '(he) verily became silent, telling Him (Govinda), "I shall not fight"' is to be explained as revealing the cause of the origin of the defect in the form of sorrow, delusion, etc. (8) which are the sources of the cycles of births and deaths of creatures.

Thus indeed, Arjuna's own sorrow and delusion, caused by the ideas of affection, parting, etc., originating from the erroneous belief, 'I belong to these; they belong to me', with regard to kingdom, (9) elders, sons, comrades, well-wishers (1.26), kinsmen (1.37), relatives (1.34) and friends, have been shown by him with the words, 'How can I (fight)...in battle (against) *Bhīṣma*' (4), etc. It is verily because his discriminating insight was overwhelmed by sorrow and delusion that, even though he had become engaged in battle out of his own accord as a duty of the Kṣatriyas, he desisted from that war and chose to undertake others' duties like living on alms etc. It is thus that in the case of all creatures whose minds come under the sway of the defects of sorrow, delusion, etc, there verily follows, as a matter of course, abandoning their own duties and resorting to prohibited ones. Even when they engage in their own duties their actions with speech, mind, body, etc, are certainly motivated by hankering for rewards, and are accompanied by egoism. (10)

Such being the case, the cycle of births and deaths—characterized by passing through desirable and undesirable births, and meeting with happiness, sorrow, etc. (11) from the accumulation of virtue and vice, continues unendingly. Thus, sorrow and delusion are therefore the sources of the cycles of births and deaths. And their cessation comes from nothing

other than the knowledge of the Self which is preceded by the renunciation of all duties. Hence, wishing to impart that (knowledge of the Self) for favouring the whole world, Lord Vāsudeva, making Arjuna the medium, said, 'You grieve for those who are not to be grieved for,' etc.

As to that some (opponents) (12) say: Certainly, Liberation cannot be attained merely from continuance in the knowledge of the Self which is preceded by renunciation of all duties and is independent of any other factor. What then? The well-ascertained conclusion of the whole of the *Gītā* is that Liberation is attained through Knowledge associated with rites and duties like Agnihotra etc. prescribed in the Vedas and the Smṛtis. And as an indication of this point of view they quote (the verses): 'On the other hand, if you will not fight this righteous (battle)' (33); 'Your right is for action (rites and duties) alone' (47); 'Therefore you undertake action (rites and duties) itself' (4.15), etc. Even this objection should not be raised that Vedic rites and duties lead to sin since they involve injury and the etc.'.

Objection: How?

Opponent: The duties of the Kṣatriyas, characterized by war, do not lead to sin when undertaken as one's duty, even though they are extremely cruel since they involve violence against elders, brothers, sons, and others. And from the Lord's declaration that when they are not performed, 'then, forsaking your own duty and fame, you will incur sin' (33), it stands out as (His) clearly stated foregone conclusion that one's own duties prescribed in such texts as, '(One shall perform Agnihotra) as long as one lives' etc., and actions which involve cruelty to animals etc. are not sinful.

Vedāntin: That is wrong because of the assertion of the distinction between firm adherence (*niṣṭhā*) to Knowledge and to action, which are based on two (different) convictions (*buddhi*).

The nature of the Self, the supreme Reality, determined by the Lord in the text beginning with 'Those who are not to be grieved for' (11) and running to the end of the verse, 'Even considering your own duty' (31), is called Sāṅkhya. Sāṅkhya-*buddhi* (13) (Conviction about the Reality) is the conviction with regard to That (supreme Reality) arising from the ascertainment of the meaning of the context (14)—that the Self is not an

agent because of the absence in It of the six kinds of changes, namely, birth etc. (15) Sāṇkhyas are those men of Knowledge to whom that (conviction) becomes natural. Prior to the rise of this Conviction (Sāṅkhya-*buddhi*), the ascertainment (16) of the performance of the disciplines leading to Liberation—which is based on a discrimination between virtue and vice, (17) and which presupposes the Self's difference from the body etc. and Its agentship and enjoyership—is called Yoga. The conviction with regard to that (Yoga) is Yoga-*buddhi*. The performers of rites and duties, for whom this (conviction) is appropriate, are called yogīs.

Accordingly, the two distinct Convictions have been pointed out by the Lord in the verse, 'This wisdom (*buddhi*) has been imparted to you from the standpoint of Self-realization (Sāṅkhya). But listen to this (wisdom) from the standpoint of (Karma-) yoga' (39). And of these two, the Lord will separately speak, with reference to the Sāṅkhyas, of the firm adherence to the Yoga of Knowledge (18) which is based on Sāṅkhya-*buddhi*, in, 'Two kinds of adherences were spoken of by Me in the form of the Vedas, in the days of yore.' (19) Similarly, in, 'through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3), He will separately speak of the firm adherence to the Yoga (20) of Karma which is based on Yoga-*buddhi* (Conviction about Yoga). Thus, the two kinds of steadfastness—that based on the conviction about the nature of the Self, and that based on the conviction about rites and duties—have been distinctly spoken of by the Lord Himself, who saw that the coexistence of Knowledge and rites and duties is not possible in the same person, they being based on the convictions of non-agentship and agentship, unity and diversity (respectively).

As is this teaching about the distinction (of the two adherences), just so has it been revealed in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*: 'Desiring this world (the Self) alone monks and Brāhmaṇas renounce their homes' (cf. Bṛ. 4.4.22). After thus enjoining renunciation of all rites and duties, it is said in continuation, 'What shall we achieve through children, we who have attained this Self, this world (result).' (21) Again, there itself it is said that, before accepting a wife a man is in his natural state. (22) And (then) after his enquiries into rites and duties, (23) 'he', for the attainment of the three worlds (24) 'desired' (see Bṛ. 1.4.17) as their means a son and the two kinds of wealth, human and divine, of which the human wealth consists of rites

and duties that lead to the world of manes, and the divine wealth of acquisition of *vidyā* (meditation) which leads to heaven. In this way it is shown that rites and duties enjoined by the Vedas etc. are meant only for one who is unenlightened and is possessed of desire. And in the text, 'After renouncing they take to mendicancy' (see Bṛ. 4.4.22), the injunction to renounce is only for one who desires the world that is the Self, and who is devoid of hankering (for anything else).

Now, if the intention of the Lord were the combination of Knowledge with Vedic rites and duties, then this utterance (of the Lord) (3.3) about the distinction would have been illogical. Nor would Arjuna's question, 'If it be Your opinion that wisdom (Knowledge) is superior to action (rites and duties)...,' etc. (3.1) be proper. If the Lord had not spoken earlier of the impossibility of the pursuit of Knowledge and rites and duties by the same person (at the same time), then how could Arjuna falsely impute to the Lord —by saying, 'If it be Your opinion that wisdom is superior to action....'—(of having spoken) what was not heard by him, namely the higher status of Knowledge over rites and duties? Moreover, if it be that the combination of Knowledge with rites and duties was spoken of for all, then it stands enjoined, ipso facto, on Arjuna as well. Therefore, if instruction had been given for practising both, then how could the question about 'either of the two' arise as in, 'Tell me for certain one of these (action and renunciation) by which I may attain the highest Good' (3.2)? Indeed, when a physician tells a patient who has come for a cure of his biliousness that he should take things which are sweet and soothing, there can arise no such request as, 'Tell me which one of these two is to be taken as a means to cure biliousness'! Again, if it be imagined that Arjuna put the question because of his non-comprehension of the distinct meaning of what the Lord had said, even then the Lord ought to have answered in accordance with the question: 'The combination of Knowledge with rites and duties was spoken of by Me. Why are you confused thus?' On the other hand, it was not proper to have answered, 'Two kinds of steadfastness were spoken of by Me in the days of yore,' in a way that was inconsistent and at variance with the question.

Nor even do all the statements about distinction etc. become logical if it were intended that Knowledge was to be combined with rites and duties

enjoined by the Smṛtis only. Besides, the accusation in the sentence, 'Why then do you urge me to horrible action' (3.1) becomes illogical on the part of Arjuna who knew that fighting was a Kṣatriya's natural duty enjoined by the Smṛtis. Therefore, it is not possible for anyone to show that in the scripture called the *Gītā* there is any combination, even in the least, of Knowledge of the Self with rites and duties enjoined by the Śrutis or the Smṛtis. But in the case of a man who had engaged himself in rites and duties because of ignorance and defects like the attachment, and then got his mind purified through sacrifices, charities or austerities (see Bṛ. 4.4.22), there arises the knowledge about the supreme Reality—that all this is but One, and Brahman is not an agent (of any action). With regard to him, although there is a cessation of rites and duties as also of the need for them, yet, what may, appear as his diligent continuance, just as before, in those rites and duties for setting an example before people—that is no action in which case it could have stood combined with Knowledge. Just as the actions of Lord Vāsudeva, in the form of performance of the duty of a Kṣatriya, do not get combined with Knowledge for the sake of achieving the human goal (Liberation), similar is the case with the man of Knowledge because of the absence of hankering for results and agentship. Indeed, a man who has realized the Truth does not thing 'I am doing (this)' nor does he hanker after its result.

Again, as for instance, a person hankering after such desirable things as heaven etc. may light up a fire for performing such rites as Agnihotra etc. which are the means to attain desirable things; (25) then, while he is still engaged in the performance of Agnihotra etc. as the means for the desirable things, the desire may get destroyed when the rite is half-done. He may nevertheless continue the performance of those very Agnihotra etc.; but those Agnihotra etc. cannot be held to be for his personal gain.

Accordingly does the Lord also show in various places that, 'even while performing actions,' he does not act, 'he does not become tainted' (5.7). As for the texts, '...as was performed earlier by the ancient ones' (4.15), 'For Janaka and others strove to attain Liberation through action itself' (3.20), they are to be understood analytically.

Objection: How so?

Vedāntin: As to that, if Janaka and others of old remained engaged in activity even though they were knowers of Reality, they did so for preventing people from going astray, while remaining established in realization verily through the knowledge that 'the organs rest (act) on the objects of the organs' (3.28). The idea is this that, though the occasion for renunciation of activity did arise, they remained established in realization along with actions; they did not give up their rites and duties.

On the other hand, if they were not knowers of Reality, then the explanation should be this: Through the discipline of dedicating rites and duties to God, Janaka, and others remained established in perfection (*saṁsiddhi*) either in the form of purification of mind or rise of Knowledge. This very idea (26) will be expressed by the Lord in, '(the yogīs) undertake action for the purification of oneself (that is, of the heart, or the mind)' (5.11). After having said, 'A human being achieves success by adoring Him through his own duties' (27) (18.46), He will again speak of the steadfastness in Knowledge of a person who has attained success, in the text, '(Understand...from Me...that process by which) one who has achieved success attains Brahman' (18.50).

So, the definite conclusion in the *Gītā* is that Liberation is attained only from the knowledge of Reality, and not from its combination with action. And by pointing out in the relevant contexts the (aforesaid) distinction, we shall show how this conclusion stands.

That being so, Lord Vāsudeva found that for Arjuna, whose mind was thus confused about what ought to be done (28) and who was sunk in a great ocean of sorrow, there could be no rescue other than through the knowledge of the Self. And desiring to rescue Arjuna from that, He said, '(You grieve for) those who are not to be grieved for,' etc. by way of introducing the knowledge of the Self. (29)

The Blessed Lord said:

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः॥११॥

11. You grieve for whose who are not to be grieved for; and you speak words of wisdom! The learned do not grieve for the departed and those who have not departed.

Bhīṣma, Droṇa and others are not to be grieved for, because they are of noble character and are eternal in their real nature. With regard to them, *aśocyān*, who are not to be grieved for; *tvam*, you; *anvaśocaḥ*, grieve, (thinking) 'They die because of me; without them what shall I do with dominion and enjoyment?'; *ca*, and; *bhāṣase*, you speak; *prajñāvādān*, words of wisdom, words used by men of wisdom, of intelligence. The idea is, 'Like one mad, you show in yourself this foolishness and learning which are contradictory.'

Because, *paṇḍitāḥ*, the learned, the knowers of the Self—*paṇḍā* means wisdom about the Self; those indeed who have this are *paṇḍitāḥ*, on the authority of the Upaniṣadic text, '...the knowers of Brahman, having known all about scholarship,...' (Bṛ. 3.5.1) (30)—; *na anuśocanti*, do not grieve for; *gatāsūn*, the departed, whose life has become extinct; *agatāsūn ca*, and for those who have not departed, whose life has not left, the living. The idea is, 'Your are sorrowing for those who are eternal in the real sense, and who are not to be grieved for. Hence you are a fool!'

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपा:।
न चैव न भविष्याम: सर्वे वयमत: परम्॥१२॥

12. But certainly (it is) not (a fact) that I did not exist at any time; nor you, nor these rulers of men. And surely it is not that we all shall cease to exist after this.

Why are they not to be grieved for? Because they are eternal. How? *Na tu eva*, but certainly it is not (a fact); that *jātu*, at any time; *aham*, I; *na āsam*, did not exist; on the contrary, I did exist. The idea is that when the bodies were born or died in the past, I existed eternally. (31) Similarly, *na tvam*, nor is it that you did not exist; but you surely existed. *Ca*, and so also; *na ime*, nor is it that these; *jana-adhipāḥ*, rulers of men, did not exist. On the other hand, they did exist. And similarly, *na eva*, it is surely not that; *vayam*, we; *sarve*, all; *na bhaviṣyamaḥ*, shall cease to exist; *ataḥ param*, after this, even after the destruction of this body. On the contrary, we shall

exist. The meaning is that even in all the three times (past, present and future) we are eternal in our nature as the Self. The plural number (in *we*) is used following the diversity of the bodies, but not in the sense of the multiplicity of the Self.

देहिनोऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति॥१३॥

13. As are boyhood, youth, and decrepitude to an embodied being in this (present) body, similar is the acquisition of another body. This being so, an intelligent person does not get deluded.

As to that, to show how the Self is eternal, the Lord cites an illustration by saying, '...of the embodied,' etc. *Yathā*, as are, the manner in which; *kaumāram*, boyhood; *yauvanam*, youth, middle age; and *jarā*, decrepitude, advance of age; *dehinaḥ*, to an embodied being, to one who possesses a body (*deha*), to the Self possessing a body; *asmin*, in this, present; *dehe*, body—. These three states are mutually distinct. Of these, when the first state gets destroyed the Self does not get destroyed; when the second state comes into being It is not born. What then? It is seen that the Self, which verily remains unchanged, acquires the second and third states. *Tathā*, similar, indeed; is Its, the unchanging Self's *dehāntaraprāptiḥ*, acquisition of another body, a body different from the present one. This is the meaning. *Tatra*, this being so; *dhīraḥ*, an intelligent person; *na*, does not; *muhyati*, get deluded.

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदु:खदा:।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत॥१४॥

14. But the contacts of the organs with the objects are the producers of cold and heat, happiness, and sorrow. They have a beginning and an end, (and) are transient. Bear them, O descendant of Bharata.

'In the case of a man who knows that the Self is eternal, although there is no possibility of delusion concerning the destruction of the Self, still delusion, as of ordinary people, caused by the experience of cold, heat, happiness, and sorrow is noticed in him. Delusion arises from being deprived of happiness, and sorrow arises from contact with pain etc.'.

Apprehending this kind of a talk from Arjuna, the Lord said, ‘But the contacts of the organs,’ etc.

Mātrā-sparśāḥ, the contacts of the organs with objects; are *śīta-uṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ*, producers of cold, heat, happiness, and sorrow. *Mātrāḥ* means those by which are marked off (measured up) sounds etc., that is, the organs of hearing etc. The *sparśāḥ*, contacts, of the organs with sound etc. are *mātrā-sparśāḥ*. Or, *sparśāḥ* means those which are contacted, that is, objects, viz. sound etc. *Mātrā-sparśāḥ*, the organs *and* objects, are the producers of cold, heat, happiness, and sorrow.

Cold sometimes produces pleasure, and sometimes pain. Similarly the nature of heat, too, is unpredictable. On the other hand, happiness and sorrow have definite natures since they do not change. Hence they are mentioned separately from cold and heat. Since they, the organs, the contacts, etc., *āgama-apāyinaḥ*, have a beginning and an end, are by nature subject to origination and destruction; therefore, they are *anityāḥ*, transient. Hence, *titikṣasva*, bear; *tān*, them—cold, heat, etc., i.e. do not be happy or sorry with regard to them.

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ।
समदु:खसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते॥१५॥

15. O (Arjuna, who are) foremost among men, verily, the person whom these do not torment, the wise man to whom sorrow and happiness are the same—he is fit for Immortality.

What will happen to one who bears cold and heat? Listen: ‘Verily, the person...,’ etc.

(O Arjuna) *hi*, verily; *yam puruṣam*, the person whom; *ete*, these, cold and heat mentioned above; *na*, do not; *vyathayanti*, torment, do not perturb; *dhīram*, the wise man; *sama-duḥkha-sukham*, to whom sorrow and happiness are the same, who is free from happiness and sorrow when subjected to pleasure and pain, because of his realization of the eternal Self; *saḥ*, he, who is established in the realization of the eternal Self, who forbears the opposites; *kalpate*, becomes fit; *amṛtattvāya*, for Immortality, for the state of Immortality, that is, for Liberation.

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः॥१६॥

16. Of the unreal there is no being; the real has no non-existence. But the nature of both these, indeed, has been realized by the seers of Truth.

Since 'the unreal has no being,' etc., for this reason also it is proper to bear cold, heat, etc. without becoming sorrowful or deluded. *Asataḥ*, of the unreal, of cold, heat, etc. together with their causes; *na vidyate*, there is no; *bhāvaḥ*, being, existence, reality; because heat, cold, etc. together with their causes are not substantially real when tested by means of proof. For they are changeful, and whatever is changeful is inconstant. As configurations like pot etc. are unreal since they are not perceived to be different from earth when tested by the eyes, so also are all changeful things unreal because they are not perceived to be different from their (material) causes, and also because they are not perceived before (their) origination and after destruction.

Objection: If it be that (32) such (material) causes as earth etc. as also their causes are unreal since they are not perceived differently from their causes, in that case, may it not be urged that owing to the non-existence of those (causes) there will arise the contingency of everything becoming unreal? (33)

Vedāntin: No, for in all cases there is the experience of two awarenesses, viz. the awareness of reality, and the awareness of unreality. (34) That in relation to which the awareness does not change is real; that in relation to which it changes is unreal. Thus, since the distinction between the real and the unreal is dependent on awareness, therefore in all cases (of empirical experiences) everyone has two kinds of awarenesses with regard to the same substratum: (As for instance, the experiences) 'The pot is real', 'The cloth is real', 'The elephant is real'—(which experiences) are not like (that of) 'A blue lotus'. (35) This is how it happens everywhere. (36)

Of these two awarenesses, the awareness of pot etc. is inconstant; and thus has it been shown above. But the awareness of reality is not (inconstant). Therefore the object of the awareness of pot etc. is unreal

because of inconstancy; but not so the object of the awareness of reality, because of its constancy.

Objection: If it be argued that, since the awareness of pot also changes when the pot is destroyed, therefore the awareness of the pot's reality is also changeful?

Vedāntin: No, because in cloth etc. the awareness of reality is seen to persist. That awareness relates to the objective (and not to the noun 'pot'). For this reason also it is not destroyed. (37)

Objection: If it be argued that like the awareness of reality, the awareness of a pot also persists in other pots?

Vedāntin: No, because that (awareness of pot) is not present in (the awareness of) a cloth etc.

Objection: May it not be that even the awareness of reality is not present in relation to a pot that has been destroyed?

Vedāntin: No, because the noun is absent (there). Since the awareness of reality corresponds to the adjective (that is, it is used adjectivally), therefore, when the noun is missing there is no possibility of its (that awareness) being an adjective. So, to what should it relate? But, again, the awareness of reality (does not cease) with the absence of an object. (38)

Objection: May it not be said that, when nouns like pot etc. are absent, (the awareness of existence has no noun to qualify and therefore) it becomes impossible for it to exist in the same substratum? (39)

Vedāntin: No, because in such experiences as, 'This water exists', (which arises on seeing a mirage etc.) it is observed that there is a coexistence of two objects though one of them is non-existent.

Therefore, *asataḥ*, of the unreal, viz. body etc. and the dualities (heat, cold, etc.), together with their causes; *na vidyate*, there is no; *bhāvaḥ*, being. And similarly, *sataḥ*, of the real, of the Self; *na vidyate*, there is no; *abhāvaḥ*, non-existence, because It is constant everywhere. This is what we have said.

Tu, but; *antaḥ*, the nature, the conclusion (regarding the nature of the real and the unreal) that the Real is verily real, and the unreal is verily unreal; *ubhayoḥ api*, of both these indeed, of the Self and the non-Self, of the Real and the unreal, as explained above; *dṛṣṭaḥ*, has been realized thus; *tattva-darśibhiḥ*, by the seers of Truth. *Tat* is a pronoun (*sarvanāma*, lit. name of all) which can be used with regard to all. And all is Brahman. And Its name is *tat*. The abstraction of *tat* is *tattva*, the true nature of Brahman. Those who are apt to realize this are *tattva-darśinaḥ*, seers of Truth.

Therefore, you too, by adopting the vision of the men of realization and giving up sorrow and delusion, forbear the dualities, heat, cold, etc.—some of which are definite in their nature, and others inconstant—, mentally being convinced that this (phenomenal world) is changeful, verily unreal and appears falsely like water in a mirage. This is the idea.

What, again, is that reality which remains verily as the Real and surely for ever? This is being answered in, 'But know That', etc.

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम्।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति॥१७॥

17. But know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can bring about the destruction of this Immutable.

Tu, but—this word is used for distinguishing (reality) from unreality; *tat viddhi*, know That; to be *avināśi*, indestructible, by nature not subject to destruction; what? (that) *yena*, by which, by which Brahman called Reality; *sarvam*, all; *idam*, this, the Universe together with space; is *tatam*, pervaded, as pot etc. are pervaded by space. *Na kaścit*, none; *arhati*, can; *kartum*, bring about; *vināśam*, the destruction, disappearance, non-existence; *asya*, of this *avyayasya*, of the Immutable, that which does not undergo growth and depletion. By Its very nature this Brahman called Reality does not suffer mutation, because, unlike bodies etc., It has no limbs; nor (does It suffer mutation) by (loss of something) belonging to It, because It has nothing that is Its own. Brahman surely does not suffer loss like Devadatta suffering from loss of wealth. Therefore no one can bring about the destruction of this immutable Brahman. No one, not even God

Himself, can destroy his own Self, because the Self is Brahman. Besides, action with regard to one's Self is self-contradictory.

Which, again, is that 'unreal' that is said to change its own nature? This is being answered:

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत॥१८॥

18. These destructible bodies are said to belong to the everlasting, indestructible, indeterminable, embodied One. Therefore, O descendant of Bharata, join the battle.

Ime, these; *antavantah*, destructible; *dehāḥ*, bodies—as the idea of reality which continues with regard to water in a mirage, etc. gets eliminated when examined with the means of knowledge, and that is its end, so are these bodies and they have an end like bodies etc. in dream and magic—; *uktāḥ*, are said, by discriminating people; to belong *nityasya*, to the everlasting; *anāśinaḥ*, the indestructible; *aprameyasya*, the indeterminable; *śarīriṇaḥ*, embodied One, the Self. This is the meaning.

The two words 'everlasting' and 'indestructible' are not repetitive, because in common usage everlastingness and destructibility are of two kinds. As for instance, a body which is reduced to ashes and has disappeared is said to have been destroyed. (And) even while existing, when it becomes transfigured by being afflicted with diseases etc. it is said to be 'destroyed'. (40) That being so, by the two words 'everlasting' and 'indestructible' it is meant that It is not subject to both kinds of destruction. Otherwise, the everlastingness of the Self would be like that of the earth etc. Therefore, in order that this contingency may not arise, it is said, 'Of the everlasting, indestructible'.

Aprameyasya, of the indeterminable, means 'of that which cannot be determined by such means of knowledge as direct perception etc.'

Objection: Is it not that the Self is determined by the scriptures, and before that through direct perception etc.?

Vedāntin: No, because the Self is self-evident. For, (only) when the Self stands predetermined as the knower, there is a search for a means of

knowledge by the knower. Indeed, it is not that without first determining oneself as, ‘I am such’, one takes up the task of determining an object of knowledge. For what is called the ‘self’ does not remain unknown to anyone. But the scripture is the final authority (41). By way of merely negating superimposition of qualities that do not belong to the Self, it attains authoritativeness with regard to the Self, but not by virtue of making some unknown thing known. There is an Upaniṣadic text in support of this: ‘...the Brahman that is immediate and direct, the Self that is within all’ (Bṛ. 3.4.1).

Since the Self is thus eternal and unchanging, *tasmāt*, therefore; *yudhyasva*, you join the battle, that is, do not desist from the war. Here there is no injunction to take up war as a duty, because he (Arjuna), though he was determined for war, remains silent as a result of being overpowered by sorrow and delusion. Therefore, all that is being done by the Lord is the removal of the obstruction to his duty. ‘Therefore, join the battle’ is only an approval, not an injunction.

The scripture *Gītā* is intended for eradicating sorrow, delusion, etc. which are the causes of the cycle of births and deaths; it is not intended to enjoin action. As evidences of this idea the Lord cites two Vedic verses: (42)

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम्।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते॥१९॥

19. He who thinks of this One as the killer, and he who thinks of this One as the killed—both of them do not know. This One does not kill, nor is It killed.

But the ideas that you have, ‘Bhīṣma and others are being killed by me in war; I am surely their killer’—this idea of yours is false. How? *Yaḥ*, he who; *vetti*, thinks; of *enam*, this One, the embodied One under consideration; as *hantāram*, the killer, the agent of the act of killing; *ca*, and; *yaḥ*, he who, the other who; *manyate*, thinks; of *enam*, this One; as *hatam*, the killed—(who thinks) ‘When the body is killed, I am myself killed; I become the object of the act of killing’; *ubhau tau*, both of them; owing to non-discrimination, *na*, do not; *vijānītaḥ*, know the Self which is the subject of the consciousness of ‘I’. The meaning is: On the killing of the

body, he who thinks of the Self (—the content of the consciousness of ‘I’—) (43) as ‘I am the killer’, and he who thinks, ‘I have been killed’, both of them are ignorant of the nature of the Self. For, *ayam*, this Self; owing to Its changelessness, *na hanti*, does not kill, does not become the agent of the act of killing; *na hanyate*, nor is It killed, that is, It does not become the object (of the act of killing).

The second verse is to show how the Self is changeless:

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-
न्नायं भूत्वाऽभविता वा न भूयः।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे॥२०॥

20. Never is this One born, and never does It die; nor is it that having come to exist, It will again cease to be. This One is birthless, eternal, undecaying, ancient; It is not killed when the body is killed.

Na kadācit, never; is *ayam*, this One; *jāyate*, born that is, the Self has no change in the form of being born—to which matter is subject—; *vā*, and (—*vā* is used in the sense of *and*); *na mriyate*, It never dies. By this is denied the final change in the form of destruction. The word (*na*) *kadācit*, never, is connected with the denial of all kinds of changes thus—never is It born, never does It die, etc. Since *ayam*, this Self; *bhūtvā*, having come to exist, having experienced the process of origination; *na*, will not; *bhūyaḥ*, again; *abhavitā*, cease to be thereafter, therefore It does not die. For, in common parlance, that which ceases to exist after coming into being is said to die. From the use of the words *vā*, nor, and *na* not, it is understood that, unlike the body, this Self does not again come into existence after having been non-existent. Therefore It is not born. For, the words, ‘It is born’, are used with regard to something which comes into existence after having been non-existent. The Self is not like this. Therefore It is not born.

Since this is so, therefore It is *ajaḥ*, birthless; and since It does not die, therefore It is *nityaḥ*, eternal. Although all changes become negated by the denial of the first and the last kinds of changes, still changes occuring in the middle (44) should be denied with their own respective terms by which they are implied. Therefore the text says *śāśvataḥ*, undecaying, so that all the

changes, viz. youth etc., which have not been mentioned may become negated. The change in the form of decay is denied by the word *śāśvata*, that which lasts for ever. In Its own nature It does not decay because It is free from parts. And again, since it is without qualities, there is no degeneration owing to the decay of any quality. Change in the form of growth, which is opposed to decay, is also denied by the word *purāṇaḥ*, ancient. A thing that grows by the addition of some parts is said to increase and is also said to be new. But this Self was fresh even in the past due to Its partlessness. Thus It is *purāṇaḥ*, that is, It does not grow. So also, *na hanyate*, It is not killed, It does not get transformed; even when *śarīre*, the body; *hanyamāne*, is killed, transformed. The verb 'to kill' has to be understood here in the sense of transformation, so that a tautology (45) may be avoided.

In this *mantra* the six kinds of transformations, the material changes seen in the world, are denied in the Self. The meaning of the sentence is that the Self is devoid of all kinds of changes. Since this is so, therefore 'both of them do not know'—this is how the present *mantra* is connected to the earlier *mantra*.

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम्।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम्॥२१॥

21. O Pārtha, he who knows this One as indestructible, eternal, birthless, and undecaying, how and whom does that person kill, or whom does he cause to be killed! (46)

In the *mantra*, 'He who thinks of this One as the killer,' having declared that (the Self) does not become the agent or the object of the act of killing, and then in the *mantra*, 'Never is this One born,' etc., having stated the reasons for (Its) changelessness, the Lord sums up the purport of what was declared above: He who knows this One as indestructible, etc.

Yaḥ, he who; *veda*, knows—*yaḥ* is to be thus connected with *veda*—; *enam*, this One, possessing the characteristics stated in the earlier *mantra*; as *avināśinam*, indestructible, devoid of the final change of state; *nityam*, eternal, devoid of transformation; *ajam*, birthless; and *avyayam*, undecaying; *katham*, how, in what way; (and *kam*, whom;) does *saḥ*, that

man of realization; *puruṣaḥ*, the person who is himself an authority; (47) *hanti*, kill, undertake the act of killing; or how *ghātayati*, does he cause (others) to be killed, (how does he) instigate a killer! The intention is to deny both (the acts) by saying, 'In no way does he kill any one, nor does he cause anyone to be killed', because an interrogative sense is absurd (here). Since the implication of the reason, (48) viz. the immutability of the Self, (49) is common (with regard to all actions), therefore the negation of all kinds of actions in the case of a man of realization is what the Lord conveys as the only purport of this context. But the denial of (the act of) killing has been cited by way of an example.

Objection: By noticing what special reason for the impossibility of actions in the case of the man of realization does the Lord deny all actions (in his case) by saying, 'How can that person,' etc.?

Vedāntin: Has not the immutability of the Self been already stated as the reason, (50) the specific ground for the impossibility of all actions?

Objection: It is true that it has been stated; but that is not a specific ground, for the man of realization is different from the immutable Self. Indeed, may it not be argued that action does not become impossible for one who has known an unchanging stump of a tree?

Vedāntin: No, because of man of Knowledge is one with the Self. Enlightenment does not belong to the aggregate of body and senses. Therefore, as the last alternative, the knower is the Immutable and is the Self which is not a part of the aggregate. Thus, action being impossible for that man of Knowledge, the denial in, 'How can that person...,' etc. is reasonable. As on account of the lack of knowledge of the distinction between the Self and the modifications of the intellect, the Self, though verily immutable, is imagined through ignorance to be the perceiver of objects like sound etc. presented by the intellect etc., in this very way, the Self, which in reality is immutable, is said to be the 'knower' because of Its association with the knowledge of the distinction between the Self and non-Self, which (knowledge) is a modification of the intellect (51) and is unreal by nature. From the statement that action is impossible for man of realization it is understood that the conclusion of the Lord is that, actions enjoined by the scriptures are prescribed for the unenlightened.

Objection: Is not enlightenment too enjoined for the ignorant? For, the injunction about enlightenment to one who has already achieved realization is useless, like grinding something that has already been ground! This being so, the distinction that rites and duties are enjoined for the unenlightened, and not for the enlightened one, does not stand to reason.

Vedāntin: No. There can reasonably be a distinction between the existence or non-existence of a thing to be performed. As after the knowledge of the meaning of the injunction for rites like Agnihotra etc. their performance becomes obligatory on the unenlightened one who thinks, 'Agnihotra etc. has to be performed by collecting various accessories; I am the agent, and this is my duty',—unlike this, nothing remains later on to be performed as a duty after knowing the meaning of the injunction about the nature of the Self from such texts as, 'Never is this One born,' etc. But apart from the rise of knowledge regarding the unity of the Self, his non-agency, etc., in the form, 'I am not the agent, I am not the enjoyer', etc., no other idea arises. Thus, this distinction can be maintained.

Again, for anyone who knows himself as, 'I am the agent', there will necessarily arise the idea, 'This is my duty.' In relation to that he becomes eligible. In this way duties are (enjoined) (52) for him. And according to the text, 'both of them do not know' (19), he is an unenlightened man. And the text, 'How can that person,' etc. concerns the enlightened person distinguished above, because of the negation of action (in this text).

Therefore, the enlightened person distinguished above, who has realized the immutable Self, and the seeker of Liberation are qualified only for renunciation of all rites and duties. Therefore, indeed, the Lord Nārāyaṇa, making a distinction between the enlightened man of Knowledge and the unenlightened man of rites and duties, makes them take up the two kinds of adherences in the text, 'through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization; through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3). Similarly also, Vyāsa said to his son, 'Now, there are these two paths,' etc. (53) So also (there is a Vedic text meaning): 'The path of rites and duties, indeed, is the earlier, and renunciation comes after that.' (54) The Lord will show again and again this very division: 'The unenlightened man who is deluded by egoism thinks thus: "I am the doer"; but the one who is a knower of the

facts (about the varieties of the *guṇas*) thinks, "I do not act"' (cf. 3.27,28). So also there is the text, '(The embodied man of self-control,) having given up all actions mentally, continues (happily in the town of nine gates)' (5.13) etc.

With regard to this some wiseacres say: In no person does arise the idea, 'I am the changeless, actionless Self, which is One and devoid of the six kinds of changes beginning with birth to which all things are subject', on the occurrence of which (idea alone) can renunciation of all actions be enjoined. That is not correct, because it will lead to the needlessness of such scriptural instructions as, 'Never is this One born,' etc. (20). They should be asked: As on the authority of scriptural instructions there arises the knowledge of the existence of virtue and vice and the knowledge regarding an agent who gets associated with successive bodies, similarly, why should not there arise from the scriptures the knowledge of unchangeability, non-agentship, oneness, etc. of that very Self?

Objection: If it be said that this is due to Its being beyond the scope of any means (of knowledge)?

Vedāntin: No, because the Śruti says, 'It is to be realized through the mind alone, (following the instruction of the teacher)' (Bṛ. 4.4.19). The mind that is purified by the instructions of the scriptures and the teacher, control of the body and organs, etc. becomes the instrument for realizing the Self. Again, since there exist inference and scriptures for Its realization, it is mere bravado to say that Knowledge does not arise. And it has to be granted that when knowledge arises, it surely eliminates ignorance, its opposite. And that ignorance has been shown in, 'I am the killer', 'I am killed', and 'both of them do not know' (see 2.19). And here also it is shown that the idea of the Self being an agent, the object of an action, or an indirect agent, is the result of ignorance. Also, the Self being changeless, the fact that such agentship etc. are caused by ignorance is a common factor in all actions without exception, because only that agent who is subject to change instigates someone else who is different from himself and can be acted on, saying, 'Do this.'

Thus, with a view to pointing out the absence of fitness for rites and duties in the case of an enlightened person, the Lord (55) says, 'He who

knows this One as indestructible,' 'how can that person,' etc.—thereby denying this direct and indirect agentship of an enlightened person in respect of all actions without exception. As regards the question, 'For what, again, is the man of enlightenment qualified?', the answer has already been given earlier in, 'through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization' (3.3). Similarly, the Lord will also speak of renunciation of all actions in, 'having given up all actions mentally,' etc. (5.13).

Objection: May it not be argued that from the expression, 'mentally', (it follows that) oral and bodily actions are not to be renounced?

Vedāntin: No, because of the categoric expression, 'all actions'.

Objection: May it not be argued that 'all actions' relates only to those of the mind?

Vedāntin: No, because all oral and bodily actions are preceded by those of the mind, for those actions are impossible in the absence of mental activity.

Objection: May it not be said that one has to mentally renounce all other activities except the mental functions which are the causes of scriptural rites and duties performed through speech and body?

Vedāntin: No, because it has been specifically expressed: 'without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all' (5.13).

Objection: May it not be that this renunciation of all actions, as stated by the Lord, is with regard to a dying man, not one living?

Vedāntin: No, because (in that case) the specific statement, 'The embodied man ... continues happily in the town of nine gates' (ibid.) will become illogical since it is not possible for a dead person, who neither acts nor makes others act, (56) to rest in that body after renouncing all actions.

Objection: Can it not be that the construction of the sentence (under discussion) is, '(he rests) by depositing (*sannyasya*, by renouncing) in the body', (but) not 'he rests in the body by renouncing...'?

Vedāntin: No, because everywhere it is categorically asserted that the Self is changeless. Besides, the action of 'resting' requires a location,

whereas renunciation is independent of this. The word *nyāsa* preceded by *sam* here means ‘renunciation’, not ‘depositing’. Therefore, according to this Scripture, viz. the *Gītā*, the man of realization is eligible for renunciation, alone, not for rites and duties. This we shall show in the relevant texts later on in the context of the knowledge of the Self.

And now we shall speak of the matter on hand: As to that, the indestructibility (57) of the Self, has been postulated. What is it like? That is being said in, ‘As after rejecting worn-out clothes,’ etc.

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही॥२२॥

22. As after rejecting worn-out clothes a man takes up other new ones, likewise after rejecting worn-out bodies the embodied one unites with other new ones.

Yathā, as in the world; *vihāya*, after rejecting; *jīrṇāni*, worn-out; *vāsāmsi*, clothes; *naraḥ*, a man *gṛhṇāti*, takes up; *aparāṇi*, other; *navāni*, new ones; *tathā*, likewise, in that very manner; *vihāya*, after rejecting; *jīrṇāni*, worn-out; *śarīrāṇi*, bodies; *dehī*, the embodied one, the Self which is surely unchanging like the man (in the example); *saṁyāti*, unites with; *anyāni*, other; *navāni*, new ones. This is meaning.

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः॥२३॥

23. Weapons do not cut It, fire does not burn It, water does not moisten It, and air does not dry It.

Why does It verily remain unchanged? This is being answered in, ‘Weapons do not cut It,’ etc. *Śastrāṇi*, weapons; *na*, do not; *chindanti*, cut; *enam*, It, the embodied one under discussion. It being partless, weapons like sword etc. do not cut off Its limbs. So also, even *pāvakaḥ*, fire; *na dahati enam*, does not burn, does not reduce It to ashes. *Ca*, and similarly; *āpaḥ*, water; *na enam kledayanti*, does not moisten It. For water has the power of

disintegrating a substance that has parts, by the process of moistening it. That is not possible in the case of the partless Self. Similarly, air destroys an oil substance by drying up the oil. Even *mārutaḥ*, air; *na śoṣayati*, does not dry; (*enam*, It,) one's own Self. (58)

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः॥२४॥

24. It cannot be cut, It cannot be burnt, cannot be moistened, and surely cannot be dried up. It is eternal, omnipresent, stationary, unmoving, and changeless.

Since this is so, therefore *ayam*, It; *acchedyaḥ*, cannot be cut. Since the other elements which are the causes of destruction of one another are not capable of destroying this Self, therefore It is *nityaḥ*, eternal. Being eternal, It is *sarva-gataḥ*, omnipresent. Being omnipresent, It is *sthāṇuḥ*, stationary, that is, fixed like a stump. Being fixed, *ayam*, this Self; is *acalaḥ*, unmoving. Therefore It is *sanātanaḥ*, changeless, that is, It is not produced from any cause, as a new thing.

It is not to be argued that 'these verses are repetitive since eternality and changelessness of the Self have been stated in a single verse itself, "Never is this One born, and never does It die," etc. (20). Whatever has been said there (in verse 19) about the Self does not go beyond the meaning of this verse. Something is repeated with those very words, and something ideologically.' Since the object, namely the Self, is inscrutable, therefore Lord Vāsudeva raises the topic again and again, and explains that very object in other words so that, somehow, the unmanifest Self may come within the comprehension of the intellect of the transmigrating persons and bring about a cessation of their cycles of births and deaths.

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि॥२५॥

25. It is said that This is unmanifest; This is inconceivable; This is unchangeable. Therefore, having known This thus, you ought not to grieve.

Moreover, *ucyate*, it is said that; *ayam*, This, the Self; is *avyaktaḥ*, unmanifest, since, being beyond the ken of all the organs, It cannot be

objectified. For this very reason, *ayam*, This; is *acintyaḥ*, inconceivable. For anything that comes within the purview of the organs becomes the object of thought. But this Self is inconceivable because It is not an object of the organs. Hence, indeed, It is *avikāryaḥ*, unchangeable. This Self does not change as milk does when mixed with curd, a curdling medium, etc. And It is changeless owing to partlessness, for it is not seen that any non-composite thing is changeful. Not being subject to transformation, It is said to be changeless. *Tasmāt*, therefore; *viditvā*, having known; *enam*, this one, the Self; *evam*, thus, as described; *na arhasi*, you ought not; *anuśocitum*, to grieve, thinking, 'I am the slayer of these; these are killed by me.'

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम्।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैवं शोचितुमर्हसि॥२६॥

26. On the other hand, if you think this One is born continually or dies constantly, even then, O mighty-armed one, you ought not to grieve thus.

This (verse), 'On the other hand,' etc., is uttered assuming that the Self is transient. *Atha ca*, on the other hand, if (—conveys the sense of assumption—); following ordinary experience, *manyase*, you think; *enam*, this One, the Self under discussion; is *nityajātam*, born continually, becomes born with the birth of each of the numerous bodies; *vā*, or; *nityam*, constantly; *mṛtam*, dies, along with the death of each of these (bodies); *tathā api*, even then, even if the Self be of that nature; *tvam*, you; *mahā-bāho*, O mighty-armed one; *na arhasi*, ought not; *śocitum*, to grieve; *evam*, thus, since that which is subject to birth will die, and that which is subject to death will be born; these two are inevitable.

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि॥२७॥

27. For death of anyone born is certain, and of the dead (re-) birth is a certainty. Therefore you ought not to grieve over an inevitable fact.

This being so, 'death of anyone born', etc. *Hi*, for; *mṛtyuḥ*, death; *jātasya*, of anyone born; *dhruvaḥ*, is certain; is without exception; *ca*, and *mṛtasya*, of the dead; *janmaḥ*, (re-) birth; is *dhruvam*, a certainty. *Tasmāt*, therefore, this fact, namely birth and death, is inevitable. With regard to that

(fact), *aparihārye*, over an inevitable; *arthe*, fact; *tvam*, you; *na arhasi*, ought not; *śocitum*, to grieve.

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना॥२८॥

28. O descendant of Bharata, all beings remain unmanifest in the beginning; they become manifest in the middle. After death they certainly become unmanifest. What lamentation can there be with regard to them?

It is not reasonable to grieve even for beings which are constituted by bodies and organs, since 'all beings remain unmanifest' etc. (*Bhārata*, O descendant of Bharata;) *bhūtāni*, all beings, *avyaktādīni*, remain unmanifest in the beginning. Those beings, namely sons, friends, and others, constituted by bodies and organs, (59) who before their origination have unmanifestedness (*avyakta*), invisibility, non-perception, as their beginning (*ādi*) are *avyakta-ādīni*. *Ca*, and; after origination, before death, they become *vyakta-madhyāni*, manifest in the middle. Again, they *eva*, certainly; become *avyakta-nidhanāni*, unmanifest after death. Those which have unmanifestness (*avyakta*), invisibility, as their death (*nidhana*) are *avyakta-nidhanāni*. The idea is that even after death they verily attain unmanifestedness. Accordingly has it been said: 'They emerged from invisibility, and have gone back to invisibility. They are not yours, nor are you theirs. What is this fruitless lamentation!' (Mbh. St. 2.13). *Kā*, what; *paridevanā*, lamentation, or what prattle, can there be; *tatra*, with regard to them, that is, with regard to beings which are objects of delusion, which are invisible, (become) visible, (and then) get destroyed!

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-
माश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति
श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित्॥२९॥

29. Someone visualizes It as a wonder; and similarly indeed, someone else talks of It as a wonder; and someone else hears of It as a wonder. And someone else, indeed, does not realize It even after hearing about It.

‘This Self under discussion is inscrutable. Why should I blame you alone regarding a thing that is a source of delusion to all!’ How is this Self inscrutable? (60) This is being answered in, ‘Someone visualizes It as a wonder,’ etc.

Kaścit, someone; *paśyati*, visualizes; *enam*, It, the Self; *āścaryavat*, as a wonder, as though It were a wonder—a wonder is something not seen before, something strange, something seen all on a sudden; what is comparable to that is *āścaryavat*; *ca*, and; *tathā*, similarly; *eva*, indeed; *kaścit*, someone; *anyaḥ*, else; *vadati*, talks of It as a wonder. And someone else *śṛṇoti*, hears of It as a wonder. And someone, indeed, *na*, does not; *veda*, realize It; *api*, even; *śrutvā*, after hearing, seeing, and speaking about It.

Or, (the meaning is) he who sees the Self is like a wonder. He who speaks of It and he who hears of It is indeed rare among many thousands. Therefore, the idea is that the Self is difficult to understand.

Now, in the course of concluding the topic under discussion, (61) He says, ‘O descendant of Bharata, this embodied Self’, etc.

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि॥३०॥

30. O descendant of Bharata, this embodied Self existing in everyone’s body can never be killed. Therefore you ought not to grieve for all (these) beings.

Because of being partless and eternal, *ayam*, this *dehī*, embodied Self; *nityam avadhyaḥ*, can never be killed, under any condition. That being so, although existing *sarvasya dehe*, in all bodies, in trees etc., this One cannot be killed on account of Its being all-pervasive. Since the indwelling One cannot be killed although the body of everyone of the living beings be killed, *tasmāt*, therefore; *tvam*, you; *na arhasi*, ought not; *śocitum*, to grieve; for *sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, all (these) beings, for Bhīṣma and others.

Here (62) it has been said that, from the standpoint of the supreme Reality, there is no occasion for sorrow or delusion. (This is so) not merely from the standpoint of the supreme Reality, but—

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते॥३१॥

31. Even considering your own duty you should not waver, since there is nothing else better for a Kṣatriya than a righteous battle.

Api, even; *avekṣya*, considering; *svadharmam*, your own duty, the duty of a Kṣatriya, namely battle—considering even that—; *na arhasi*, you ought not; *vikampitum*, to waver, to deviate from the natural duty of the Kṣatriya, that is, from what is natural to yourself. And *hi*, since that battle is not devoid of righteousness, (but) is supremely righteous—it being conducive to virtue and meant for protection of subjects through conquest of the earth—; therefore, *na vidyate*, there is nothing; *anyat*, else; *śreyaḥ*, better; *kṣatriyasya*, for a Kṣatriya; than that *dharmyāt*, righteous; *yuddhāt*, battle.

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम्।
सुखिन: क्षत्रिया: पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम्॥३२॥

32. O son of Pṛthā, happy are the Kṣatriyas who come across this kind of a battle, which presents itself unsought for and which is an open gate to heaven.

Why, again, does that battle become a duty? This is being answered (as follows) (63): *Pārtha*, O son of Pṛthā; are not those Kṣatiryas *sukhinaḥ*, happy; (64) who *labhante*, come across; a *yuddham*, battle; *īdṛśam*, of this kind; *upapannam*, which presents itself; *yadṛcchayā*, unsought for; and which is an *apāvṛtam*, open; *svarga-dvāram*, gate to heaven? (65)

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि।
तत: स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि॥३३॥

33. On the other hand, if you will not fight this righteous battle, then, forsaking your own duty and fame, you will incur sin.

Atha, on the other hand; *cet*, if; *tvam*, you; *na kariṣyasi*, will not fight; even *imam*, this; *dharmyam*, righteous; *saṁgrāmam*, battle, which has presented itself as a duty, which is not opposed to righteousness, and which is enjoined (by the scriptures); *tataḥ*, then, because of not undertaking that;

hitvā, forsaking; *sva-dharmam*, your own duty; *ca*, and; *kīrtim*, fame, earned from encountering Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) and others; *avāpsyasi*, you will incur; only *pāpam*, sin.

अकीर्तिञ्चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते॥ ३४॥

34. People also will speak of your unending infamy. And to an honoured person infamy is worse than death.

Not only will there be the giving up of your duty and fame, but *bhūtāni*, people; *ca api*, also; *kathayiṣyanti*, will speak; *te*, of your; *avyayām*, unending, perpetual; *akīrtim*, infamy. *Ca*, and; *sambhāvitasya*, to an honoured person, to a person honoured with such epithets as 'virtuous', 'heroic', etc.; *akīrtiḥ*, infamy; *atiricyate*, is worse than; *maraṇāt*, death. The meaning is that, to an honoured person death is preferable to infamy.

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम्॥ ३५॥

35. The great chariot-riders will think of you as having desisted from the fight out of fear; and you will fall into disgrace before them to whom you had been estimable.

Moreover, *mahārathāḥ*, the great chariot-riders, Duryodhana and others; *maṁsyante*, will think; *tvām*, of you; as *uparatam*, having desisted; *raṇāt*, from the fight; not out of compassion, but *bhayāt*, out of fear of Karṇa and others; *ca*, and; *yāsyasi lāghavam*, you will again fall into disgrace before them, before Duryodhana and others; *yeṣām*, to whom; *tvam*, you; *bahumato bhūtvā*, had been estimable as endowed with many qualities.

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम्॥ ३६॥

36. And your enemies will speak many indecent words while denigrating your might. What can be more painful than that?

Ca, and besides; *tava*, your; *ahitāḥ*, enemies; *vadiṣyanti*, will speak; *bahūn*, many, various kinds of; *avācya-vādān*, indecent words, unutterable words; *nindantaḥ*, while denigrating, scorning; *tava*, your; *sāmarthyam*, might earned from battles against Nivātakavaca and others. Therefore, *kim nu*, what can be; *duḥkhataram*, more painful; *tataḥ*, than that, than the sorrow arising from being scorned? That is to say, there is no greater pain than it.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम्।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः॥३७॥

37. Either by being killed you will attain heaven, or by winning you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, O Arjuna, rise up with determination for fighting.

Again, by undertaking the fight with Karṇa and others, *vā*, either; *hataḥ*, by being killed; *prāpsyasi*, you will attain; *svargam*, heaven; or *jitvā*, by winning over Karṇa and other heroes; *bhokṣyase*, you will enjoy; *mahīm*, the earth. The purport is that in either case you surely stand to gain. Since this is so, *Kaunteya*, O son of Kuntī; *tasmāt*, therefore; *uttiṣṭha*, rise up; *kṛta-niścayaḥ*, with determination; *yuddhāya*, for fighting, that is, with the determination, 'I shall either defeat the enemies or shall die.'

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि॥३८॥

38. Treating happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, and conquest and defeat with equanimity, then engage in battle. Thus you will not incur sin.

As regards that, listen to this advice for you when you are engaged in battle considering it to be your duty: *Kṛtvā*, treating; *sukha-duḥkhe*, happiness and sorrow; *same*, with equanimity, that is, without having likes and dislikes; so also treating *lābha-alābhau*, gain and loss; *jaya-ajayau*, conquest and defeat, as the same; *tataḥ*, then; *yuddhāya yujyasva*, engage in battle. *Evam*, thus by undertaking the fight; *na avāpsyasi*, you will not incur; *pāpam*, sin. This advice is incidental. (66)

The generally accepted argument for the removal of sorrow and delusion has been stated in the verses beginning with, 'Even considering

your own duty' (31), etc., but this has not been presented by accepting that as the real intention (of the Lord).

The real context here (in 2.12 etc.), however, is of the realization of the supreme Reality. Now, in order to show the distinction between the (two) topics dealt with in this scripture, the Lord concludes that topic which has been presented above (in 2.20 etc.), by saying, 'This (wisdom) has been imparted,' etc. For, if the distinction between the topics of the scripture be shown here, then the instruction relating to the two kinds of adherences—as stated later on in, 'through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization; through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3)—will proceed again smoothly, and the hearer also will easily comprehend it by keeping in view the distinction between the topics. Hence the Lord says:

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि॥३९॥

39. O Pārtha, this wisdom has been imparted to you from the standpoint of Self-realization. But listen to this (wisdom) from the standpoint of Yoga, endowed with which wisdom you will get rid of the bondage of action.

Pārtha, O son of Pṛthā (Arjuna); *eṣā*, this; *buddhiḥ*, wisdom, the Knowledge which directly removes the defect (namely ignorance) that is responsible for sorrow, delusion, etc. (67) constituting mundane existence; *abhihitā*, has been imparted; *te*, to you; *sāṅkhye*, from the standpoint of Self-realization, with regard to the discriminating knowledge of the supreme Reality. *Tu*, but; *śṛṇu*, listen; *imām*, to this wisdom which will be imparted presently; *yoge*, from the standpoint of Yoga, from the standpoint of the means of attaining it (Knowledge)—that is, in the context of Karma-yoga, the performance of rites and duties with detachment after destroying the pairs of opposites, for the sake of adoring God, as also in the context of the practice of spiritual absorption.

As as inducement, He (the Lord) praises that wisdom: *Yuktaḥ*, endowed; *yayā*, with which; *buddhyā*, wisdom concerning Yoga; O Pārtha, *prahāsyasi*, you will get rid of; *karma-bandham*, the bondage of action—action is itself the bondage described as righteousness and unrighteousness;

you will get rid of that bondage by the attainment of Knowledge through God's grace. This is the idea.

> **नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते।**
> **स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्॥४०॥**

40. Here there is no waste of an attempt; nor is there (any) harm. Even a little of this righteousness saves (one) from great fear.

Moreover, *iha*, here, in the path to Liberation, namely the Yoga of Action (rites and duties); *na*, there is no; *abhikrama-nāśaḥ*, waste of an attempt, of a beginning, unlike as in agriculture etc. The meaning is that the result of any attempt in the case of Yoga is not uncertain. Besides, unlike as in medical care, *na vidyate*, nor is there, nor does there arise; any *pratyavāyaḥ*, harm. But, *svalpam api*, even a little; *asya*, of this; *dharmasya*, righteousness in the form of Yoga (of Action); when practised, *trāyate*, saves (one); *mahato bhayāt*, from great fear, of mundane existence characterized by death, birth, etc.

> **व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन।**
> **बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम्॥४१॥**

41. O scion of the Kuru dynasty, in this there is a single, one-pointed conviction. The thoughts of the irresolute ones have many branches indeed, and are innumerable.

Kuru-nandana, O scion of the Kuru dynasty; *iha*, in this path to Liberation; there is only *ekā*, a single; *vyavasāyātmikā*, one-pointed; *buddhiḥ*, conviction, which has been spoken of in the Yoga of Knowledge and which has the characteristics going to be spoken of in (Karma-) yoga. It is resolute by nature and annuls the numerous branches of the other opposite thoughts, since it originates from the right source of knowledge. (68) Those again, which are the other *buddhayaḥ*, thoughts; they are *bahu-śākhāḥ*, possessed of numerous branches, that is, possessed of numerous variations. Owing to the influence of their many branches the worldly state becomes endless, limitless, unceasing, ever-growing and extensive. (69) But even the worldly state ceases with the cessation of the infinite branches of thoughts, under the influence of discriminating wisdom arising from the

valid source of knowledge. (And those thoughts are) *hi*, indeed; *anantāḥ*, innumerable under every branch. Whose thoughts? *Avyavasāyinām*, of the irresolute ones, that is, of those who are devoid of discriminating wisdom arising from the right source of knowledge.

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चित: ।
वेदवादरता: पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिन: ॥४२॥

कामात्मान: स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥४३॥

42-43. O son of Pṛthā, those undiscerning people who utter this flowery talk—which promises birth as a result of rites and duties, and is full of various special rites meant for the attainment of enjoyment and affluence—, they remain engrossed in the utterances of the Vedas and declare that nothing else exists; their minds are full of desires and they have heaven as the goal.

Pārtha, O son of Pṛthā; those devoid of one-pointed conviction, who *pravadanti*, utter; *imām*, this; *yām puṣpitām vācam*, flowery talk, which is going to be stated, which is beautiful like a tree in bloom, pleasant to hear, and appears to be (meaningful) sentences; (70)—who are they? they are—*avipaścitaḥ*, people who are undiscerning, of poor intellect, that is, non-discriminating; *veda-vāda-ratāḥ*, who remain engrossed in the utterances of the Vedas, in the Vedic sentences which reveal many panegyrics, fruits of action and their means; and *vādinaḥ*, who declare, are apt to say; *iti*, that; *na anyat*, nothing else; (71) *asti*, exists, apart from the rites and duties conducive to such results as attainment of heaven etc.

And they are *kāmātmānaḥ*, have their minds full of desires, that is, they are swayed by desires, they are, by nature, full of desires; (and) *svarga-parāḥ*, have heaven as the goal. Those who accept heaven (*svarga*) as the supreme (*para*) human goal, to whom heaven is the highest, are *svarga-parāḥ*. They utter that speech (—this is supplied to construct the sentence —) which *janma-karma-phala-pradām*, promises birth as a result of rites and duties. The result (*phala*) of rites and duties (*karma*) is *karma-phala*. Birth (*janma*) itself is the *karma-phala*. That (speech) which promises this is *janma-karma-phala-pradā*. (This speech) is *kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām*, full of

various special rites; *bhoga-aiśvarya-gatim-prati*, for the attainment of enjoyment and affluence. Special (*viśeṣa*) rites (*kriyā*) are *kriyā-viśeṣāḥ*. The speech that is full (*bahulā*) of these, the speech by which these, namely objects such as heaven, animals, and sons, are revealed plentifully, is *kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulā*. *Bhoga*, enjoyment, and *aiśvarya*, affluence, are *bhoga-aiśvarya*. Their attainment (*gatiḥ*) is *bhoga-aiśvarya-gatiḥ*. (They utter a speech) that is full of the specialized rites, *prati*, meant for that (attainment). The fools who utter that speech move in the cycle of transmigration. This is the idea.

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते॥४४॥

44. One-pointed conviction does not become established in the minds of those who delight in enjoyment and affluence, and whose intellects are carried away by that (speech).

And *vyavasāyātmikā*, one-pointed; *buddhiḥ*, conviction, with regard to Knowledge or Yoga; *na vidhīyate*, does not become established, that is, does not arise; *samādhau*, in the minds—the word *samādhi* being derived in the sense of that into which everything is gathered together for the enjoyment of a person—; *bhoga-aiśvarya-prasaktānām*, of those who delight in enjoyment and wealth, of those who have the hankering that only enjoyment as also wealth is to be sought for, of those who identify themselves with these; and *apahṛta-cetasām*, of those whose intellects are carried away, whose discriminating judgement becomes covered; *tayā*, by that speech which is full of various special rites.

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान्॥४५॥

45. O Arjuna, the Vedas (72) have the three qualities as their object. You become free from worldliness, free from the pairs of duality, ever-poised in the quality of *sattva*, without (desire for) acquisition and protection, and self-collected.

To those who are thus devoid of discriminating wisdom, who indulge in pleasure, (73) O Arjuna, *vedāḥ*, the Vedas; *traigunya-viṣayāḥ*, have the

three qualities as their object, have the three *guṇas*, (74) that is, the worldly life, as the object to be revealed. But you *bhava*, become; *nistraiguṇyaḥ*, free from the three qualities, that is, be free from desires. (75) (Be) *nirdvandvaḥ*, free from the pairs of duality—by the word *dvandva*, duality, are meant the conflicting pairs (76) which are the causes of happiness and sorrow; you become free from them. (77)

You become *nitya-sattvasthaḥ*, ever-poised in the quality of *sattva*; (and) so also *niryoga-kṣemaḥ*, without (desire for) acquisition and protection. *Yoga* means acquisition of what one has not, and *kṣema* means the protection of what one has. For one who has 'acquisition and protection' foremost in his mind, it is difficult to seek Liberation. Hence, you be free from acquisition and protection. And also be *ātmavān*, self-collected, vigilant. This is the advice given to you while you are engaged in your own duty. (78)

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वत: संप्लुतोदके।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानत:॥४६॥

46. A Brāhmaṇa with realization has that much utility in all the Vedas as a man has in a well when there is a flood all around.

If there be no need for the infinite results of all the rites and duties mentioned in the Vedas, then why should they be performed as a dedication to God? Listen to the answer being given:

In the world, *yāvān*, whatever; *arthaḥ*, utility, use, like bathing, drinking, etc.; one has *udapāne*, in a well, pond, and other numerous limited reservoirs; all that, indeed, is achieved, that is, all those needs are fulfilled to that very extent; *samplutodake*, when there is a flood; *sarvataḥ*, all around. In a similar manner, whatever utility, result of action, there is *sarveṣu*, in all; the *vedeṣu*, Vedas, that is, in the rites and duties mentioned in the Vedas; all that utility is achieved, that is, gets fulfilled; *tāvān*, to that very extent; in that result of realization which comes *brāhmaṇasya*, to a Brāhmaṇa, a *sannyāsin*; *vijānataḥ*, who knows the Reality that is the supreme Goal—that result being comparable to the flood all around. For there is the Upaniṣadic text, '...so all virtuous deeds performed by people get included in this one...who knows what he (Raikva) knows...' (Ch.

4.1.4). The Lord also will say, 'all actions in their totality culminate in Knowledge' (4.33). (79)

Therefore, before one attains the fitness for steadfastness in Knowledge, rites and duties, even though they have (limited) utility as that of a well, pond, etc., have to be undertaken by one who is fit for rites and duties.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥४७॥

47. Your right is for action alone, never for the results. Do not become the agent of the results of action. May you not have any inclination for inaction.

Te, your; *adhikāraḥ*, right; is *karmaṇi eva*, for action alone, not for steadfastness in Knowledge. Even there, when you are engaged in action, you have *mā kadācana*, never, that is, under no condition whatever; a right *phaleṣu*, for the results of action—may you not have a hankering for the results of action. Whenever you have a hankering for the fruits of action, you will become the agent of acquiring the results of action. *Mā*, do not; thus *bhūḥ*, become; *karma-phala-hetuḥ*, the agent of acquiring the results of action. For when one engages in action by being impelled by thirst for the results of action, then he does become the cause for the production of the results of action. *Mā*, may you not; *astu*, have; *saṅgaḥ*, an inclination; *akarmaṇi*, for inaction, thinking, 'If the results of work be not desired, what is the need of work which involves pain?'

योगस्थ: कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यो: समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते॥४८॥

48. By being established in Yoga, O Dhanañjaya (Arjuna), undertake actions, casting off attachment and remaining equipoised in success and failure. Equanimity is called Yoga.

If action is not to be undertaken by one who is under the impulsion of the fruits of action, how then are they to be undertaken? This is being stated: *Yogasthaḥ*, by becoming established in Yoga; O Dhanañjaya, *kuru*, undertake; *karmāṇi*, actions, for the sake of God alone; even there, *tyaktvā*,

casting off; *saṅgam*, attachment, in the form, ‘God will be pleased with me.’ (80)

Undertake actions *bhūtvā*, remaining; *samaḥ*, equipoised; *siddhi-asiddhyoḥ*, in success and failure—even in the success characterized by the attainment of Knowledge that arises from the purification of the mind when one performs actions without hankering for the results, and in the failure that arises from its opposite. (81) What is that Yoga with regard to being established in which it is said, ‘undertake’? This indeed is that: the *samatvam*, equanimity in success and failure; *ucyate*, is called; *yogaḥ*, Yoga.

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः॥४९॥

49. O Dhanañjaya, indeed, action is quite inferior to the yoga of wisdom. Take resort to wisdom. Those who thirst for rewards are pitiable.

Then again, O Dhanañjaya, as against action performed with equanimity of mind for adoring God, *karma*, action undertaken by one longing for the results; is, *hi*, indeed; *dūreṇa*, quite, by far; *avaram*, inferior, very remote; *buddhi-yogāt*, from the yoga of wisdom, from actions undertaken with equanimity of mind, because it (the former) is the cause of birth, death, etc. Since this is so, therefore, *śaraṇam anviccha*, take resort to, seek shelter; *buddhau*, under wisdom, which relates to Yoga, or to the Conviction about Reality that arises from its (the former’s) maturity and which is the cause of (achieving) fearlessness. The meaning is that you should resort to the knowledge of the supreme Goal, because those who undertake inferior actions, *phala-hetavaḥ*, who thirst for rewards, who are impelled by results; are *kṛpaṇāḥ*, pitiable, according to the Śruti, ‘He, O Gārgī, who departs from this world without knowing this Immutable, is pitiable’ (Bṛ. 3.8.10). (82)

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥५०॥

50. Possessed of wisdom, one rejects here both virtue and vice. Therefore devote yourself to (Karma-) yoga. Yoga is skilfulness in action.

Listen to the result that one possessed of the wisdom of equanimity attains by performing one's own duties: *Buddhi-yuktaḥ*, possessed of wisdom, possessed of the wisdom of equanimity; since one *jahāti*, rejects; *iha*, here, in this world; *ubhe*, both; *sukṛta-duṣkṛte*, virtue and vice (righteousness and unrighteousness), through the purification of the mind and acquisition of Knowledge; *tasmāt*, therefore; *yujyasva*, devote yourself; *yogāya*, to (Karma-) yoga, the wisdom of equanimity. For Yoga is *kauśalam*, skilfulness; *karmasu*, in action. Skilfulness means the attitude of the skilful, the wisdom of equanimity with regard to one's success and failure while engaged in actions (*karma*)—called one's own duties (*sva-dharma*)—with the mind dedicated to God.

That indeed is skilfulness which, through equanimity, makes actions, that by their very nature bind, give up their nature! Therefore, be you devoted to the wisdom of equanimity.

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम्॥५१॥

51. Because, those who are devoted to wisdom, (they) becoming men of Enlightenment by giving up the fruits produced by actions, reach the state beyond evils by having become freed from the bondage of birth.

The words '*phalam tyaktvā*, by giving up the fruits' are connected with the remote word '*karmajam*, produced by actions'.

Hi, because; (83) *buddhi-yuktāḥ*, those who are devoted to wisdom, who are imbued with the wisdom of equanimity; (they) becoming *manīṣiṇaḥ*, men of Enlightenment; *tyaktvā*, by giving up; *phalam*, the fruit, the acquisition of desirable and undesriable bodies; (84) *karmajam*, produced by actions; *gacchanti*, reach; *padam*, the state, the supreme state of *Viṣṇu*, called Liberation; *anāmayam*, beyond evils, that is, beyond all evils; by having become *janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ*, freed from the bondage of birth—birth (*janma*) itself is a bondage (*bandha*); becoming freed from that —, even while living.

Or :— Since it (*buddhi*) has been mentioned as the direct cause of the elimination of righteousness and unrighteousness, etc., therefore what has been presented (in the three verses) beginning with, 'O Dhanañjaya,...to the

yoga of wisdom' (49), is enlightenment itself, which consists in the realization of the supreme Goal, which is comparable to a flood all around, and which arises from the purification of the mind as a result of Karma-yoga. (85)

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च॥५२॥

52. When your mind will go beyond the turbidity of delusion, then you will acquire dispassion for what has to be heard and what has been heard.

When is attained that wisdom which arises from the purification of the mind brought about by the pursuit of (Karma-) yoga? This is being stated: *Yadā*, when, (86) at the time when; *te*, your; *buddhiḥ*, mind; *vyatitariṣyati*, will go beyond, cross over; *moha-kalilam*, the turbidity of delusion, the dirt in the form of delusion, in the form of non-discrimination, which, after confounding one's understanding about the distinction between the Self and the not-Self, impels the mind towards objects—that is to say, when your mind will attain the state of purity; *tadā*, then, (87) at that time; *gantāsi*, you will acquire; *nirvedam*, dispassion; for *śrotavyasya*, what has to be heard; *ca*, and; *śrutasya*, what has been heard. The idea implied is that, at that time what has to be heard and what has been heard (88) becomes fruitless.

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि॥५३॥

53. When your mind that has become bewildered by hearing (89) will become unshakable and steadfast in the Self, then you will attain Yoga that arises from discrimination.

If it be asked, 'By becoming possessed of the wisdom arising from the discrimination about the Self after overcoming the turbidity of delusion, when shall I attain the yoga of the supreme Reality which is the fruit that results from Karma-yoga?', then listen to that; *Yadā*, when at the time when; *te*, your; *buddhiḥ*, mind; that has become *śruti-vipratipannā*, bewildered, tossed about, by hearing (the Vedas) that reveal the diverse ends, means, and (their) relationship, that is, are filled with divergent ideas; *sthāsyati*, will become; *niścalā*, unshakable, free from the turbulence in the

form of distractions; and *acalā*, steadfast, that is to say, free from doubt even in that (unshakable) state; *samādhau*, in *samādhi*, that is to say, in the Self—*samādhi* being derived in the sense of that in which the mind is fixed; *tadā*, then, at that time; *avāpsyasi*, you will attain; *yogam*, Yoga, the enlightenment, Self-absorption, that arises from discrimination.

Having got an occasion for inquiry, Arjuna, with a view to knowing the characteristics of one who has the realization of the Self, (90) asked:

Arjuna said:

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम्॥५४॥

54. O Keśava, what is the description of a man of steady wisdom who is Self-absorbed? How does the man of steady wisdom speak? How does he sit? How does he move about?

O Keśava, *kā*, what; is the *bhāṣā*, description, the language (for the description)—how is he described by others—; *sthita-prajñasya*, of a man of steady wisdom, of one whose realization, 'I am the supreme Brahman', remains steady; *samādhi-sthasya*, of one who is Self-absorbed? Or *kim*, how; does the *sthitadhīḥ*, *dhīḥ*, man of steady wisdom; himself *prabhāṣeta*, speak? How does he *āsīta*, sit? How does he *vrajeta*, move about? That is to say, of what kind is his sitting or moving?

Through this verse Arjuna asks for a description of the man of steady wisdom.

The Blessed Lord said:

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान्।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते॥५५॥

55. O Pārtha, when one fully renounces all the desires that have entered the mind, and remains satisfied in the Self alone by the Self, then he is called a man of steady wisdom.

In the verses beginning from, 'When one fully renounces...', and ending with the completion of the Chapter, instruction about the characteristics of

the man of steady wisdom and the disciplines (he had to pass through) is being given both for the one who has, indeed, applied himself to steadfastness in the Yoga of Knowledge after having renounced rites and duties from the very beginning, (91) and for the one who has (applied himself to this after having passed) through the path of Karma-yoga. For in all the scriptures without exception, dealing, with spirituality, whatever are the characteristics of the man of realization are themselves presented as the disciplines for an aspirant, because these (characteristics) are the result of effort. And those that are the disciplines requiring effort, they become the characteristics (of the man of realization). (92)

O Pārtha, *yadā*, when, at the time when; *prajahāti*, one fully renounces; *sarvān*, all; the *kāmān*, desires, varieties of desires; *manogatān*, that have entered the mind, entered into the heart—.

If all desires are renounced while the need for maintaining the body persists, then, in the absence of anything to bring satisfaction, there may arise the possibility of one's behaving like lunatics or drunkards. (93) Hence it is said: *Tuṣṭaḥ*, remains satisfied; *ātmani eva*, in the Self alone, in the very nature of the inmost Self; *ātmanā*, by the Self which is his own—indifferent to external gains, and satiated with everything else on account of having attained the nectar of realization of the supreme Goal; *tadā*, then; *ucyate*, he is called; *sthita-prajñaḥ*, a man of steady wisdom, a man of realization, one whose wisdom, arising from the discrimination between the Self and the not-Self, is stable.

The idea is that the man of steady wisdom is a monk, who has renounced the desire for progeny, wealth and the worlds, and who delights in the Self and disports in the Self.

दु:खेष्वनुद्विग्नमना: सुखेषु विगतस्पृह: ।
वीतरागभयक्रोध: स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

56. That monk is called a man of steady wisdom when his mind is unperturbed in sorrow, he is free from longing for delights, and has gone beyond attachment, fear and anger.

Moreover, that *muniḥ*, monk; (94) *ucyate*, is then called; *sthita-dhīḥ*, a man of steady wisdom; when *anudvignamanāḥ*, his mind is unperturbed;

duḥkheṣu, in sorrow—when his mind remains unperturbed by the sorrows that may come on the physical or other planes [95]—; so also, when he is *vigata-spṛhaḥ*, free from longing; *sukheṣu*, for delights—when he, unlike fire which flares up when fed with fuel etc., has no longing for delights when they come to him—; and *vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ*, has gone beyond attachment, fear, and anger.

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम्।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता॥५७॥

57. The wisdom of that person remains established who has not attachment for anything anywhere, who neither welcomes nor rejects anything whatever good or bad when he comes across it.

Further, *prajñā*, the wisdom; *tasya*, of that person, of that *sannyāsin*; *pratiṣṭhitā*, remains established; *yaḥ*, who; *anabhi-snehaḥ*, has no attachment for; *sarvatra*, anything anywhere, even for body, life, etc.; who *na abhinandati*, neither welcomes; *na dveṣṭi*, nor rejects; *tat tat*, anything whatever; *śubha-aśubham*, good or bad; *prāpya*, when he comes across it, that is, who does not rejoice on meeting with the good, nor reject the bad on meeting with it. Of such a person, who is thus free from elation or dejection, the wisdom arising from discrimination remains established.

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता॥५८॥

58. And when this one fully withdraws the senses from the objects of the senses, as a tortoise wholly (withdraws) the limbs, then his wisdom remains established.

And besides, *yadā*, when; *ayam*, this one, the *sannyāsin* practising steadfastness in Knowledge; *saṁharate*, fully withdraws; [96] *indriyāṇi*, the senses; *indriya-arthebhyaḥ*, from all the objects of the senses; *iva*, as; *kūrmaḥ*, a tortoise; *sarvaśaḥ*, wholly (withdraws); *aṅgāni*, its limbs, from all sides out of fear;—when the man engaged in steadfastness to Knowledge withdraws thus, then *tasya*, his; *prajñā*, wisdom; *pratiṣṭhitā*, remains established—(the meaning of this portion has already been explained).

As to that, (97) the organs of a sick person, too, cease to be active when he refrains from sense-objects; they get fully withdrawn like the limbs of a tortoise, but not so the hankering for those objects. How that (hankering) gets completely withdrawn is being stated:

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते॥५९॥

59. The objects recede from an abstinent man, with the exception of the taste (for them). Even the taste of this person falls away after realizing the Absolute.

Although *viṣayāḥ*, the objects, (that is,) the organs, figuratively implied and expressed by the word ‘objects’, or, the objects themselves; *vinivartante*, recede; *nirāhārasya dehinaḥ*, from an abstinent man, from an embodied being, even from a fool who engages in painful austerity and abstains from objects; (still, they do so) *rasavarjam*, with the exception of the taste (for them), with the exception of the hankering that one has for objects. The word *rasa* is well known as referring to the sense of taste (hankering), as in such expressions as, ‘*sva-rasena pravṛttaḥ*, induced by his own taste (that is, willingly)’, ‘*rasikaḥ*, a man of tastes’, ‘*rasajñaḥ*, a connoisseur (of tastes)’, etc. *Api*, even that; *rasaḥ*, taste of the nature of subtle attachment; *asya*, of this person, of the *sannyāsin*; *nivartate*, falls away, that is, his objective perception becomes seedless; when *dṛṣṭvā*, after attaining; *param*, the Absolute, the Reality which is the supreme Goal, Brahman, he continues in life with the realization, ‘I verily am That (Brahman).’

In the absence of full realization there can be no eradication of the ‘hankering’. The idea conveyed is that, one should therefore stabilize one’s wisdom which is characterized by full realization. (98)

Since the organs have to be first brought under his own control by one who desires to establish firmly the wisdom which is characterized by full realization, therefore the Lord speaks of the evil that arises from not keeping them under control:

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः।

इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः॥६०॥

60. For, O son of Kuntī, the turbulent organs violently snatch away the mind of an intelligent person, even while he is striving diligently.

Hi, for; *kaunteya*, O son of Kuntī; *pramāthīni*, the turbulent; *indriyāṇī*, organs; *prasabham*, violently; *haranti*, snatch away; *manaḥ*, the mind; *vipaścitaḥ*, of an intelligent; *puruṣasya*, person; *api*, even; *yatataḥ*, while he is striving diligently (99)—(or,) the words *puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ* (of an intelligent person) are to be connected with the remote word *api* (even). (100) Indeed, the organs confound a person who is inclined towards objects, and after confounding him, violently carry away his mind endowed with discriminating knowledge, even when he is aware of this.

Since this is so, therefore,

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता॥६१॥

61. Controlling all of them, one should remain concentrated on Me as the supreme. For, the wisdom of one whose organs are under control becomes steadfast.

Saṁyamya, controlling, having subdued; *sarvāṇi*, all; *tāni*, of them; *āsīta*, one should remain; *yuktaḥ*, concentrated; *mat-paraḥ*, on Me as the supreme—he to whom I, Vāsudeva, the inmost Self of all, am the supreme (*paraḥ*) is *mat-paraḥ*. The idea is, he should remain (concentrated) thinking, 'I am not different from Him.'

Hi, for; the *prajñā*, wisdom; *tasya*, of one, of the *sannyāsin* remaining thus concentrated; *yasya*, whose; *indriyāṇi*, organs; are *vaśe*, under control, by dint of practice; (101) *pratiṣṭhitā*, becomes steadfast.

Now, then, is being stated this (102) root, cause of all the evils that beset one who is on the verge of being overwhelmed:

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते।

सङ्गात् सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते॥६२॥

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति॥६३॥

62. In the case of a person who dwells on objects, there arises attachment for them. From attachment grows hankering, from hankering springs anger.

63. From anger follows delusion; from delusion, failure of memory; from failure of memory, the loss of understanding; from the loss of understanding, he perishes.

Puṁsaḥ, in the case of a person; *dhyāyataḥ*, who dwells on, thinks of; *viṣayān*, the objects, the specialities (103) of the objects such as sound etc.; *upajāyate*, there arises; *saṅgāh*, attachment, fondness, love; *teṣu*, for them, for those objects. *Saṅgāt*, from attachment, from love; *sañjāyate*, grows; *kāmaḥ*, hankering, thirst. When that is obstructed from any quarter, *kāmāt*, from hankering; *abhijāyate*, springs; *krodhaḥ*, anger. *Krodhāt*, from anger; *bhavati*, follows; *sammohaḥ*, delusion, absence of discrimination with regard to what should or should not be done. For, an angry man, becoming deluded, abuses even a teacher.

Sammohāt, from delusion; (comes) *smṛti-vibhramaḥ*, failure of memory originating from the impressions acquired from the instructions of the scriptures and teachers. When there is an occasion for memory to rise, it does not occur. *Smṛti-bhramśāt*, from that failure of memory; (results) *buddhi-nāśaḥ*, loss of understanding. The unfitness of the mind to discriminate between what should or should not be done is called loss of understanding. *Buddhi-nāśāt*, from the loss of understanding; *praṇaśyati*, he perishes. Indeed, a man continues to be himself so long as his mind remains fit to distinguish between what he ought to and ought not do. When it becomes unfit, a man is verily ruined. Therefore, when his internal organ, his understanding, is destroyed, a man is ruined, that is, he becomes unfit for the human Goal.

Thinking of objects has been said to be the root of all evils. After that, this which is the cause of Liberation is being now stated: (104)

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन्।

आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति॥६४॥

64. But by perceiving objects with the organs that are free from attraction and repulsion, and are under his own control, the self-controlled man attains serenity.

Certainly the functions of the organs are naturally preceded by attraction and repulsion. This being so, *caran*, by perceiving; *viṣayān*, objects, which are unavoidable; *indriyaiḥ*, with the organs such as ears etc.; *rāga-dveṣa-viyuktaiḥ*, that are free from those attraction and repulsion; and are *ātma-vaśyaiḥ*, under his own control; *vidheya-ātmā*, (105) the self-controlled man, whose mind can be subdued at will, a seeker after Liberation; *adhigacchati*, attains; *prasādam*, serenity, self-poise.

What happens when there is serenity? This is being answered:

प्रसादे सर्वदु:खानां हानिरस्योपजायते।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धि: पर्यवतिष्ठते॥६५॥

65. When there is serenity, there follows eradication of all his sorrows, because the wisdom of one who has a serene mind soon becomes firmly established.

Prasāde, when there is serenity; *upajāyate*, there follows; *hāniḥ*, eradication; *asya sarva-duḥkhānām*, of all his, the *sannyāsin's*, sorrow on the physical and other planes. Moreover, (this is so) *hi*, because; *buddhiḥ*, the wisdom; *prasanna-cetasaḥ*, of one who has a serene mind, of one whose mind is poised in the Self; *āśu*, soon; *pari-avatiṣṭhate*, becomes firmly established; remains steady (*avatiṣṭhate*) totally (*pari*), like the sky, that is, it becomes unmoving in its very nature as the Self.

The meaning of the sentence is this: Since a person with such a poised mind and well-established wisdom attains fulfilment, therefore a man of concentration (106) ought to deal with the indispensable and scripturally non-forbidden objects through his senses that are free from love and hatred.

That same serenity is being eulogized:

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना।
न चाभावयत: शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुत: सुखम्॥६६॥

66. For the unsteady there is no wisdom, and there is no meditation for the unsteady man. And for an unmeditative man there is no peace. How can there be happiness for one without peace?

Ayuktasya, for the unsteady, for one who does not have a concentrated mind; *na asti*, there is no, that is, there does not arise; *buddhiḥ*, wisdom, with regard to the nature of the Self; *ca*, and; there is no *bhāvanā*, meditation, earnest longing (107) for the knowledge of the Self; *ayuktasya*, for an unsteady man. And similarly, *abhāvayataḥ*, for an unmeditative man, who does not ardently desire the knowledge of the Self; there is no *śāntiḥ*, peace, restraint of the senses. *Kutaḥ*, how can there be; *sukham*, happiness; *aśāntasya*, for one without peace? That indeed is happiness which consists in the freedom of the senses from the thirst for enjoyment of objects; not the thirst for objects—that is misery to be sure.

The implication is that, so long as thirst persists, there is no possibility of even an iota of happiness!

It is being stated why a man without concentration does not possess wisdom:

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि॥६७॥

67. For, the mind which follows in the wake of the wandering senses, that (mind) carries away his wisdom like the wind (diverting) a boat on the waters.

Hi, for; *yat manaḥ*, the mind which; *anu-vidhīyate*, follows in the wake of; *caratām*, the wandering; *indriyāṇi*, senses that are tending towards their respective objects; *tat*, that, the mind engaged in thinking (108) of the objects of the senses; *harati*, carries away, destroys; *asya*, his, the *sannyāsin's*; *prajñām*, wisdom born from the discrimination between the Self and the not-Self. How? *Iva*, like; *vāyuḥ*, the wind; diverting a *nāvam*, boat; *ambhasi*, on the waters. As wind, by diverting a boat on the waters from its intended course, drives it along a wrong course, similarly the mind, by diverting the wisdom from the pursuit of the Self, makes it engage in objects.

After having stated variously the reasons for the idea conveyed through the verse, 'For, O son of Kuntī,' etc. (60), and having established that very idea, the Lord concludes thus:

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता॥६८॥

68. Therefore, O mighty-armed one, his wisdom becomes established whose organs in all their varieties are withdrawn from their objects.

Since the evils arising from the activities of the organs have been described, *tasmāt*, therefore; *mahābāho*, O mighty-armed one; *tasya*, his, the *sannyāsin's*; *prajñā*, wisdom; *pratiṣṭhitā*, becomes established; *yasya*, whose; *indriyāṇi*, organs; *sarvaśaḥ*, in all their varieties, differentiated as mind etc.; *nigṛhītāni*, are withdrawn; *indriya-arthebhyaḥ*, from their objects such as sound etc.

In the case of a man of steady wisdom in whom has arisen discriminating knowledge, those which are these ordinary and Vedic dealings cease on the eradication of ignorance, they being effects of ignorance. And ignorance ceases because it is opposed to Knowledge. For clarifying this idea, the Lord says:

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः॥६९॥

69. The self-restrained man keeps awake during that which is night for all creatures. That during which creatures keep awake, it is night to the seeing sage.

Yā, that which; *sarva-bhūtānām*, for all creatures; is *niśā*, night—which being darkness (*tamaḥ*) by nature, obliterates distinctions among all things; what is that? that is the Reality which is the supreme Goal, accessible to the man of steady wisdom. As that which verily appears as day to the nocturnal creatures is night for others, similarly the Reality which is the supreme Goal appears to be night, as it were, to all unenlightened beings who are comparable to the nocturnal creatures, because It is beyond the range of vision of those who are devoid of that wisdom.

Saṁyamī, the self-restrained man, whose organs are under control, that is, the yogī (109) who has arisen from the sleep of ignorance; *jāgarti*, keeps awake; *tasyām*, in that (night) characterized as the Reality, the supreme Goal. That night of ignorance, characterized by the distinctions of subjects and objects, *yasyām* in which; *bhūtāni*, the creatures, who are really asleep; are said to be *jāgrati*, keeping awake, in which night they are like dreamers in sleep; *sā niśā*, it is night; *paśyataḥ*, to the seeing; *muneḥ*, sage, who perceives the Reality that is the supreme Goal, because that (night) is ignorance by nature.

Therefore, rites and duties are enjoined only during the state of ignorance, not in the state of enlightenment. For, when Knowledge dawns, ignorance becomes eradicated like the darkness of night after sunrise. (110) Before the rise of Knowledge, ignorance, accepted as a valid means of knowledge and presenting itself in the different forms of actions, means, and results, becomes the cause of all rites and duties. It cannot reasonably become the source of rites and duties (after Realization) when it is understood as an invalid means of knowledge. For an agent becomes engaged in actions when he has the idea, 'Actions have been enjoined as a duty for me by the Vedas, which are a valid means of knowledge'; but not when he understands that 'all this is mere ignorance, like the night'.

Again, the man to whom has come the Knowledge that all these differences in their totality are mere ignorance like the night, to that man who has realized the Self, there is eligibility only for renouncing all actions, not for engaging in actions. In accordance with this the Lord will show in the verse, 'Those who have their intellect absorbed in That, whose Self is That' (5.17) etc., that he has competence only for steadfastness in Knowledge.

Objection: May it not be argued that, there will be no reason for being engaged even in that (steadfastness in Knowledge) if there be no valid means of knowledge (111) to impel one to that. (112)

Answer: No, since 'knowledge of the Self' relates to one's own Self. Indeed, by the very fact that It is the Self, and since the validity of all the means of knowledge culminates in It, (113) therefore the Self does not depend on an injunction to impel It towards Itself. (114) Surely, after the

realization of the true nature of the Self, there is no scope again for any means to, or end of, knowledge. The last valid means of (Self-) knowledge eradicates the possibility of the Self's becoming a perceiver. And even as it eradicates, it loses its own authoritativeness, in the same way as the means of knowledge which is valid in dream becomes unauthoritative during the waking state. In the world, too, after the perception of an object, the valid means of that perception is not seen to be a cause impelling the knower (to any action with regard to that object).

Hence, it is established that, for a knower of the Self, there remains no eligibility for rites and duties.

The attainment of Liberation is only for the *sannyāsin*, (115) the man of enlightenment, who has renounced all desires and is a man of steady wisdom; but not for him who has not renounced and is desirous of the objects (of the senses). Such being the case, with a view to establishing this with the help of an illustration, the Lord says:

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमाप: प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥७०॥

70. That man attains peace into whom all desires enter in the same way as the waters flow into a sea that remains unchanged (even) when being filled up from all sides. Not so one who is desirous of objects.

Saḥ, that man; *āpnoti*, attains; *śāntim*, peace Liberation; *yam*, into whom, into which person; *sarve*, all; *kāmāḥ*, desires, all forms of wishes; *praviśanti*, enter, from all directions, like waters entering into a sea, without overwhelming him even in the presence of objects; they vanish in the Self, they do not bring It under their own influence, *tadvat*, in the same way; *yadvat*, as; *āpaḥ*, waters, coming from all sides; *praviśanti*, flow into; *samudram*, a sea; that remains *acala-pratiṣṭham*, unchanged, that continues to be its own self, without any change; *āpūryamāṇam*, (even) when filled up from all sides with water.

Na, not so the other; who is *kāma-kāmī*, desirous of objects. *Kāma* means objects which are sought after. He who is given to desire them is *kāma-kāmī*. The idea implied is that he never attains (peace).

Since this is so, therefore,

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति॥७१॥

71. That man attains peace who, after rejecting all desires, moves about free from hankering, without the idea of ('me' and) 'mine', and devoid of pride.

Saḥ pumān, that man who has become thus, the *sannyāsin*, the man of steady wisdom, the knower of Brahman; *adhi-gacchati*, attains; *śāntim*, peace, called *Nirvāṇa*, consisting in the cessation of all the sorrows of mundane existence, that is, he becomes one with Brahman; *yaḥ*, who; *vihāya*, after rejecting; *sarvān*, all; *kāmān*, desires, without a trace, fully; *carati*, moves about, that is, wanders about, making efforts only for maintaining the body; *niḥspṛhaḥ*, free from hankering, becoming free from any longing even for the maintenance of the body; *nirmamaḥ*, without the idea of ('me' and) 'mine', without the deep-rooted idea of 'mine' even when accepting something needed merely for the upkeep of the body; and *nir-ahaṅkāraḥ*, devoid of pride, that is, free from self esteem owing to learning etc.

This steadfastness in Knowledge, which is such, is being praised:

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति।
स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥७२॥

72. O Pārtha, this is the state of being established in Brahman. One does not become deluded after attaining this. One attains identification with Brahman by being established in this state even in the closing years of one's life.

O Pārtha, *eṣā*, this, the aforesaid; is *brāhmīsthitiḥ*, the state of being established in Brahman, that is, continuing (in life) in indentification with Brahman, after renouncing all actions.

Na vimuhyati, one does not become deluded; *prāpya*, after attaining; *enām*, this. *Ṛcchati*, one attains; *brahma-nirvāṇam*, identification with Brahman, Liberation; *sthitvā*, by being established; *asyām*, in this, in the state of Brahman-hood as described; *api*, even; *anta-kāle*, in the closing years of one's life. What need it be said that, one who remains established only in Brahman during the whole life, after having espoused monasticism even from the stage of celibacy, attains identification with Brahman!

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *Arjuna*: Literally, clear, bright. Kṛṣṇa implied that such a sentiment did not befit a person of his stature.

Unenlightened: Ignorant of the purport of the scriptures. —Ā.G.

Does not lead to heaven, but is a source of sin, or is an impediment to heaven.

[2] *Adoration*: No harsh words should be used against them in everyday life, much less should they be fought against in battle. They deserve to be worshipped with flowers, not injured with arrows.

'Hence, such an action on my part cannot be considered as righteous; rather it would be unrighteous.'

[3] *In this world*: 'Although battle is sanctioned for Kṣatriyas, one is nevertheless expected to behave morally in this world. Hence it behoves me to desist from battle.'

Here: In this world, and not in heaven.

Artha-kāmān tu, in the sense of 'though greedy for wealth', may also be construed with 'elders'. In this case the idea is that, 'though they be greedy for wealth, they are none the less noble minded' since they are versed in the scriptures and are well known for their good conduct.

Bhīṣma himself thus admitted once to Yudhisṭhira of being bound to Duryodhana for wealth: ‘A man is a slave to wealth, but wealth is nobody’s slave. O king, this is the truth. And hence I am under obligation to the Kauravas.’—Tr.

[4] *Sons*: This is according to Ā.G. M.S. takes the word *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ* in the wider sense of, ‘the followers of Dhṛtarāṣṭra’.

Ā.G. divides the earlier portion of the verse (the first sentence) thus: ‘And we know not which of the two—living upon alms without slaying others, or fighting the enemy which is our duty—is the better alternative for us; nor do we know whether we shall conquer or they will conquer us.’

[5] *Commiseration*: *Kṛpaṇa* Literally means a miser, one who cannot tolerate the least loss of his possession. In the Bṛ. it is said, ‘O Gārgī, he indeed who departs from this world without knowing this Immutable (Brahman) is a *kṛpaṇa*’ (3.8.10). He is called so because, like a miser, he cannot contemplate parting with his wealth, friends or relatives, and feels commiserate at their loss. —Ā.G.

Ś. quotes another scriptural passage: ‘A *kṛpaṇa* is one who has no control over his senses and organs.’

Duty, dharma: Ā.G. takes dharma in the sense of Brahman, and *niścitam* in the sense of ‘that which is absolutely true.’ Thus, Arjuna is here supplicating Kṛṣṇa for imparting the knowledge of Brahman which leads to absolute Liberation.

[6] *Kingdom*: that is, the duties of a king, such as protection of the subjects, rulership, and, so on.

[7] *Bhārata, O descendant of Bharata*: Some put this in the mouth of Sañjaya as addressed to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. However, Ā.G. takes this as the utterance of the Lord addressed to Arjuna, in which case this verse is to be construed with the next verse, and the construction will run thus: To him who was…Hṛṣīkeśa… said these words:
‘O descendant of Bharata, you grieve.…’—Tr.

[8] *Delusion* means want of discrimination. *Etc*. stands for the secondary manifestations of sorrow and delusion, as also ignorance which is the root cause of all these.

[9] See note under verse 8.—Tr.

[10] Egoism consists in thinking that one is the agent of some work and the enjoyer of its reward.

[11] From virtuous deeds follow attainment of heaven and happiness. From unvirtuous, sinful deeds follow births as beasts and other lowly beings, and sorrow. From the performance of both virtuous and sinful deeds follows birth as a human being, with a mixture of happiness and sorrow.

[12] According to Ā.G. the opponent is the Vṛttikāra who, in the opinion of A. Mahādeva Śāstrī, is none other than Bodhāyana referred to in Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on B.S. 1.1.11-19.—Tr.

[13] *Sāṅkhya* is that correct (*samyak*) knowledge of the Vedas which reveals (*khyāyate*) the reality of the Self, the supreme Goal. The Reality under discussion, which is related to this *saṅkhyā* by way of having been revealed by it, is Sāṅkhya.

[14] Ascertainment...of the context, that is, of the meaning of the verses starting from, 'Never is this One born, and never does It die,' etc. (20).

[15] Birth, continuance, growth, transformation, decay, and death.

[16] Aṣṭ. and Ā.G. omit this word 'ascertainment, *nirūpāṇa*'—Tr.

[17] And adoration of God.

[18] Here Yoga and Knowledge are identical. Yoga is that through which one gets connected, identified, with Brahman.

[19] This portion is ascending to Gī.Pr. and Ā.Ā.; Asṭ. omits this and quotes exactly the first line of 3.3. By saying, 'in the form of the Vedas', the Lord indicates that the Vedas, which are really the knowledge inherent in God and issue out of Him, are identical with Himself.—Tr.

[20] Here also Karma and Yoga are identical, and lead to Liberation by bringing about purity of heart which is followed by steadfastness in Knowledge.

[21] The earlier quotation implies an injuction (*vidhi*) for renunciation, and the second is an *arthavāda*, or an emphasis on that injunction.

Arthavāda: A sentence which usually recommends a *vidhi*, or precept, by stating the good arising from its proper observance, and the evils arising from its omission; and also by adducing historical instances in its support.—V.S.A

[22] The state of ignorance owing to non-realization of Reality. Such a person is a Brahmacārin, who goes to a teacher for studying the Vedas.

[23] The Brahmacārin first studies the Vedas and then enquires into their meaning. Leaving his teacher's house after completing his course, he becomes a house holder.

[24] This world, the world of manes and heaven.—Tr.

[25] The Aṣṭ. reading is: *Agnihotrādi-karma-lakṣaṇa-dharma-anuṣṭhānāya*, for the performance of duties in the form of acts like Agnihotra etc.—Tr.

[26] The idea that rites and duties become the cause of Knowledge through the purification of the mind.

[27] By performing one's own duty as enjoined by scriptures and dedicating their results to God, one's mind becomes purified. Then, through God's grace one becomes fit for steadfastness in Knowledge. From that steadfastness follows Liberation. Therefore rites and duties do not directly lead to Liberation. (See Commentary under 5.12)

[28] The Aṣṭ. and Ā.Ā., have an additional word—*mithyājñānavatāḥ*, meaning 'who had false ignorance'.—Tr.

[29] In this *Gītā* there are three distinct parts, each part consisting of six chapters. These three parts deal with the three words of the great

Upaniṣadic saying, ‘*Tattvamasi*, thou art That’, with a view to finding out their real meanings. The first six chapters are concerned with the word *tvam* (thou); the following six chapters determine the meaning of the word *tat* (that); and the last six reveal the essential identity of *tvam* and *tat*. The disciplines necessary for realizing this identity are stated in the relevant places.

[30] ‘Therefore the knowers of Brahman, having known all about scholarship, should try to live upon that strength which comes of Knowledge; having known all about this strength as well as scholarship, he becomes meditative; having known all about both meditativeness and its opposite, he becomes a knower of Brahman.’

[31] Here Aṣṭ. adds *ghaṭādiṣu viyadiva*, like Space in pot etc.—Tr.

[32] Here Aṣṭ. has the additional words ‘*kāryasya ghaṭādeḥ*, the effect, viz. pot etc. (and)’.—Tr.

[33] An entity cannot be said to be unreal merely because it is non-different from its cause. Were it to be asserted as being unreal, then the cause also should be unreal, because there is no entity which is not subject to the law of cause and effect.

[34] In all cases of perception two awarenesses are involved: one is invariable, and the other is variable. Since the variable is imagined on the invariable, therefore it is proved that there is something which is the substratum of all imagination, and which is neither a cause nor an effect.

[35] In the empirical experience, ‘A blue lotus’, there are two awarenesses concerned with two entities, viz. the substance (lotus) and the quality (blueness). In the case of the experience, ‘The pot is real’, etc. the awarenesses are not concerned with substratum and qualities, but the awareness of pot, of cloth, etc. are superimposed on the awareness of ‘reality’, like that of ‘water’ in a mirage.

[36] The coexistence of ‘reality’ and ‘pot’ etc. are valid only empirically —according to the non-dualists; whereas the coexistence of ‘blueness’ and ‘lotus’ is real according to the dualists.

[37] This last sentence has been cited in the footnote of Ā.Ā.—Tr.

[38] Even when a pot is absent and the awareness of reality does not arise with regard to it, the awareness of reality persists in the region where the pot had existed.

Some read *nanu* in place of *na tu* ('But, again'). In that case, the first portion (No,...since...adjective. So,...relate?) is a statement of the Vedāntin, and the *Objection* starts from *nanu punaḥ sadbuddheḥ*, etc. So, the next *Objection* will run thus: 'May it not be said that, when nouns like pot etc. are absent, the awareness of existence has no noun to qualify, and therefore it becomes impossible for it (the awareness of existence) to exist in the same substratum?'—Tr.

[39] The relationship of an adjective and a noun is seen between two real entities. Therefore, if the relationship between 'pot' and 'reality' be the same as between a noun and an adjective, then both of them will be real entities. So, the coexistence of reality with a non-pot does not stand to reason.

[40] Here the Ā.Ā. adds '*tathā dhana-nāśe apyevam*, similar is the case even with regard to loss of wealth.'—Tr.

[41] When the Vedic text establishes Brahman as the innermost Self, all the distinctions such as knower, known, and the means of knowledge become sublated. Thus it is reasonable that the Vedic text should be the final authority. Besides, its authority is derived from its being faultless in as much as it has not originated from any human being.

[42] Ka. 1.2.19–20. There are slight verbal differences.—Tr.

[43] The Aṣṭ. omits this phrase from the preceding sentence and includes it in this place. The Ā.Ā. has this phrase in both the places. —Tr.

[44] For the six kinds of changes see note under verse 2.10.—Tr.

[45] This verse has already mentioned 'death' in the first line. If the verb *han*, to kill, is also taken in the sense of killing, then a tautology is

unavoidable.—Tr.

[46] This is not a question but only an emphatic denial.—Tr.

[47] That is, above all injunctions and prohibitions. See 18.16-17.—Tr.

[48] The reason for the denial of killing etc. is the changelessness of the Self, and this reason holds good with regard to all actions of the man of realization.—Tr.

[49] The Ā.Ā. omits 'viz. the immutability of the Self'.—Tr.

[50] Some readings omit this word.—Tr.

[51] By *buddhi-vṛtti*, modification of the intellect, is meant the transformation of the internal organ into the form of an extension up to an object, along with its past impressions, the senses concerned, etc., like the extension of the light of a lamp illuminating an object. Consciousness reflected on this transformation and remaining indistinguishable from that transformation revealing the object, is called objective knowledge. Thereby, due to ignorance, the Self is imagined to be the perceiver because of Its connection with the *vṛtti*, modification. (—Ā.G.)

The process is elsewhere described as follows:

बुद्धितत्स्थचिदाभासौ द्वावपि व्याप्नुतो घटम् ।
तत्राज्ञानं धिया नश्येदाभासेन घटः स्फुरेत्॥ (P.7.91)

The *vṛtti* goes out through the sense-organ concerned, like the flash of a torchlight, and along with it goes the reflection of Consciousness. Both of them envelop the object, a pot for instance. The *vṛtti* destroys the ignorance about the pot; and the reflection of Consciousness, becoming unified with only that portion of it which has been delimited by the pot, reveals the pot.

ब्रह्मण्यज्ञाननाशाय वृत्तिव्याप्तिरपेक्षिता।(ibid., 92)
फलव्याप्यत्वमेवास्य शास्त्रकृद्भिर्निवारितम्। (ibid., 90)

In the case of knowledge of Brahman, it is admitted that the *vṛtti* in the form, 'I am Brahman', does reach Brahman and destroys ignorance about Brahman, but it is not admitted that Brahman is revealed like a 'pot', for Brahman is self-effulgent.—Tr.

[52] Aṣṭ. adds '*sambhavanti*, become possible'.—Tr.

[53] 'Now, there are these two paths on which the Vedas are based. They are thought of as the dharma characterized by engagement in duties, and that by renunciation of them' (Mbh. Sā. 241.6).—Tr.

[54] Aṣṭ. says that this is not a quotation, but only gives the purport of Tai. Ār. 10.62.12.—Tr.

[55] Aṣṭ, adds *vāsudeva* after 'Lord'.—Tr.

[56] The words '*akurvataḥ akārayataḥ*, (of him) who neither acts nor makes others act', have been taken as a part of the Commentator's argument. But Ā.G. points out that they can also form a part of the next *Objection*. In that, case, the translation of the *Objection* will be this: Can it not be that the construction of the sentence (under discussion) is—Neither doing nor making others do, he rests by depositing (*sannyasya*, by renouncing) in the body', but not 'he rests in the body by renouncing...'?—Tr.

[57] Indestructibility suggests unchangeability as well.

[58] Aṣṭ. reads '*enam tu ātmānam*, but this Self', in place of *enam svātmānam*.—Tr.

[59] Another reading is *kārya-kāraṇa-saṅghāta*, aggregates formed by material elements acting as causes and effects.—Tr.

[60] It may be argued that the Self is the object of egoism. The answer is: Although the individualized Self is the object of egoism, the absolute Self is not.

[61] Namely, the needlessness of sorrow and delusion, from the point of view of the nature of things.

[62] That is, in the earlier verse.

[63] A specific rule is more authoritative than a general rule. Non-violence is a general rule enjoined by the scriptures, but the duty of fighting is a specific rule for a Kṣatriya.

[64] Happy in this world as also in the other.

[65] Rites and duties like sacrifices etc. yield their results after the lapse of some time. But the Kṣatriyas go to heaven immediately after dying in battle, because, unlike the minds of others, their minds remain fully engaged in their immediate duty.

[66]The context here is that of the philosophy of the supreme Reality. If fighting is enjoined in that context, it will amount to accepting combination of Knowledge and actions. To avoid this contingency the Commentator says, 'incidental'. That is to say, although the context is of the supreme Reality, the advice to fight is incidental. It is not an injunction to combine Knowledge with actions, since fighting is here the natural duty of Arjuna as a Kṣatriya.

[67] Mundane existence consists of attraction and repulsion, agentship and enjoyership, etc. These are the defects, and they arise from ignorance about one's Self. Enlightenment is the independent and sole cause that removes this ignorance.

[68] The right source of knowledge, namely the Vedic texts, which are above criticism.

[69] *Endless*, because it does not cease till the rise of full enlightenment; *limitless*, because the worldly state, which is an effect, springs from an unreal source.

[70] Sentences that can be called really meaningful are only those that reveal the Self.—Tr.

[71] God, Liberation, etc.

[72] Meaning only the portion dealing with rites and duties (*karma-kāṇḍa*).

[73] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*yat phalam tad āha*, what result accrues, that the Lord states:'—Tr.

[74] *Traigunya* means the collection of the three qualities, namely *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (energy), and *tamas* (darkness); that is, the collection of virtuous, vicious, and mixed activities, as also their results. In this derivative sense *traigunya* means the worldly life.

[75] There is a seeming conflict between the advices to be free from the three qualities and to be ever-poised in the quality of *sattva*. Hence, the Commentator takes the phrase *nistraigunya* to mean *niṣkāma*, free from desires.

[76] Of heat and cold, etc.

[77] From heat, cold, etc. That is, forbear them.

[78] And not from the point of view of seeking Liberation.

[79] The Commentator’s quotation from the Ch. relates to meditation on the qualified Brahman. Lest it be concluded that the present verse relates to knowledge of the qualified Brahman only, he quotes again from the *Gītā* to show that the conclusion holds good in the case of knowledge of the absolute Brahman as well.

[80] ‘Undertake work for pleasing God, but not for propitiating Him to become favourable towards yourself.’

[81] Ignorance, arising from the impurity of the mind.

[82] See note under 2.7.—Tr.

[83] *Because*, when actions are performed with an attitude of equanimity, it leads to becoming freed from sin etc. Therefore, by stages, it becomes the cause of Liberation as well.

[84] *Desirable*: the bodies of gods and others; *undesirable*: the bodies of animals etc.

[85] In the first portion of the Commentary *buddhi* has been taken to mean *samattva buddhi* (wisdom of equanimity); the alternative meaning of *buddhi* has been taken as ‘enlightenment’. So, action is to be performed by taking the help of the ‘wisdom about the supreme Reality’ which has been chosen as one’s Goal.

[86] *Yadā*: when maturity of discrimination is attained.

[87] *Tadā*: then, when the mind, becoming purified, leads to the rise of discrimination, which in turn matures into detachment.

[88] *What has to be heard ... has been heard*, that is, the scriptures other than those relating to Self-knowledge. When discrimination referred to above gets matured, then the fruitlessness of all things other than Self-knowledge becomes apparent.

[89]Ś. takes the word *śruti* in the sense of the Vedas.—Tr.

[90] By the word *samādhi* is meant the enlightenment arising from discrimination, which has been spoken of in the commentary on the previous verse. The steadfastness which the monks have in that enlightenment is called steadfastness in Knowledge. Or the phrase may mean, 'the enlightenment achieved through meditation on the Self', that is, the realization of the supreme Goal.

[91] Even while he is in the stage of celibacy.

[92] There are two kinds of *sannyāsa—vidvat* (renunciation that naturally follows Realization), and *vividiṣā*, formal renunciation for undertaking the disciplines which lead to that Realization. According to Ā.G. the characteristics presented in this and the following verses describe not only the *vidvat-sannyāsin*, but are also meant as disciplines for the *vividiṣā-sannyāsin*.—Tr.

[93] A lunatic is one who has lost his power of discrimination, and a drunkard is one who has that power but ignores it.

[94] Śaṇkarācārya identifies the monk with the man of realization.

[95] Fever, headache, etc. are physical (*ādhyātmika*) sorrows; sorrows caused by tigers, snakes, etc. are environmental (*ādhibhautika*) sorrows; those caused by cyclones, floods, etc. are supernatural (*ādhidaivika*). Similarly, delights also may be experienced on the three planes.

[96] 'Fully' suggests absolute firmness in withdrawal, and 'withdraws' suggests full control over the organs.

[97] That is, so far as the phenomenal world is concerned.

[98] If it be held that attachment cannot be eliminated without the knowledge of Brahman, and at the same time that the knowledge of Brahman cannot arise until attachment is eradicated, then we get involved in a vicious circle. In answer it is said that gross attachments are eliminated through discrimination which restrains the senses from being overpowered by objects. And the full Knowledge arising thereof eliminates the subtle inclinations as well. Hence there is no vicious circle involved.

[99] Repeatedly being mindful of the evils that arise from sense-objects.

[100] The Commentator says that *api* may be construed either with *yatataḥ* or with *vipaścitaḥ puruṣasya*.—Tr.

[101] The organs come under control either by constantly thinking of oneself as non-different from the Self, or by constantly being mindful of the evils that result from objects.

[102] *This*: what is described in the following two verses, and is also a matter of common experience.

[103] *Specialities*: The charms imagined in them.

[104] If even the memory of objects be a source of evil, then their enjoyment is more so. Hence, a *sannyāsin* seeking Liberation cannot avoid this evil, since he has to move about for food which is necessary for the maintenance of his body. The present verse is an answer to this apprehension.

[105] Ā.G. takes *ātma-vasyaiḥ* in the sense of '(with the organs) under the control of *the mind*'. He then argues that if the mind be not under control, there can be no real control over the organs. Hence the text uses the second expression, '*vidheyātmā*, whose mind can be subdued at will'. Here *ātmā* is used in the sense of the mind, according to the Commentator himself.

[106] A man who is free from slavery to objects of the senses.

[107] Longing to have a continuous remembrance of the knowledge of Brahman which arises in the mind from hearing the great Upaniṣadic sayings (*mahā-vākyas*).

[108] Perceiving objects like sound etc. in their respective varieties.

[109] The man of realization.

[110] It may be argued that even after illumination the phenomenal world, though it is known to be false, will continue to be perceived because of the persistence of past impressions; therefore there is scope for the validity of the scriptural injunctions even in the case of an illumined soul. The answer is that there will be no scope for the injunctions, because the man of realization will then have no ardent leaning towards this differentiated phenomenal world which makes an injunction relevant.

[111] Vedic injunctions.

[112] Because, without an injunction nobody would engage in a duty, much less in steadfastness to Knowledge.

[113] The validity of all the means of knowledge holds good only so long as the knowledge of the Self has not arisen.

[114] Does the injunction relate to the knowledge of the Self, or to the Self Itself? The first alternative is untenable because a valid means of knowledge reveals its objects even without an injunction. The second alternative also is untenable because the Self is self-revealing, whereas an injunction is possible in the case of something yet to be achieved. And one's own Self is not an object of that kind.

[115] Liberation is attained only by one who, after acquiring an intellectual knowledge of the Self in a general way, is endowed with discrimination and detachment, has arisen above all desires, has become a monk in the primary sense, and has directly realized the Self by going through the process of *śravaṇa* (understanding of Upaniṣadic texts about the Self), etc.

CHAPTER 3

KARMA-YOGA

Two kinds of Convictions, namely the Conviction concerning Reality, and the Conviction concerning Yoga, associated with detachment from and engagement in action (respectively), which are dealt with in this Scripture (*Gītā*), have been indicated by the Lord. As to that, beginning with 'When one fully renounces all the desires' (2.55) and ending with the close of the Chapter, the Lord, having stated that *sannyāsa*, monasticism, has to be resorted to by those who are devoted to the Conviction about the Reality (Sāṅkhya-*buddhi*), has also added in the verse, 'this is the state of being established in Brahman' (2.72), that their fulfilment comes from devotion to that alone. Besides, in the verse, 'Your right is for action alone. … May you not have any inclination for inaction' (2.47), the Lord said to Arjuna that duty had to be undertaken with the aid of the Conviction about Yoga (Yoga-*buddhi*). (1) But he did not say that Liberation is attained through that alone.

Noticing this, such as it was, Arjuna got his mind puzzled and said (to himself): 'Having first made me, who am His devotee seeking Liberation, hear about steadfastness in the Conviction about Reality, which is the direct cause of Liberation, why should He urge me to action which is seen to bristle with many evils, and from which, even through an indirect process, the result, namely Liberation, is unpredictable?' Thus, Arjuna's becoming perplexed is reasonable. And the question, 'If it be Your opinion that Wisdom is superior to action…' etc., is consistent with that. The statement answering the question has been uttered by the Lord in this Scripture, where the division of the subject-matter referred to above has been dealt with.

Some, however, imagine the meaning of Arjuna's question to be otherwise, and explain the Lord's answer contrarily to that. (2) Here again, (3) they ascertain the meaning of the question and the answer inconsistently with what they themselves have determined in their Introduction to be the purport of the *Gītā*.

How?

As to that, in that Introduction it has been said by them that in the scripture *Gītā*, the conclusion presented for people in all the stages of life is the combination of Knowledge and action. It has been again specifically stated by them that (in the *Gītā*) it is absolutely denied that Liberation is attained through Knowledge alone, by renouncing action enjoined by the Vedic text, '(One should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice) throughout life.' But here (in the third chapter), when they show that the stages of life are distinct, the renunciation of those very actions which have been enjoined by the Vedic text, '(One should perform the Agnihotra sacrifice) throughout one's life, becomes admitted by them, ipso facto. Therefore, how can the Lord say such a contradictory thing to Arjuna? Or how can the hearer comprehend a contradictory statement?

Objection: In that case, let it be thus: With regard to the householders alone it is denied that, by renouncing all Vedic rites and duties, Liberation can be attained through (superficial) Knowledge alone; but not so with regard to those belonging to the other stages of life.

Reply: Even this involves a contradiction between the earlier and the later statements.

Objections: How?

Reply: After having proposed in their Introduction that the ascertained teaching of the scripture *Gītā* is the combination of Knowledge and action for people in all the stages of life, how can they assert here contradictorily that, in the case of persons in stages of life other than that of the householders, Liberation comes from Knowledge alone?

Objection: Suppose it is held that this assertion is made with regard to Vedic rites and duties, that is it is denied that householders can have Liberation through Knowledge alone which is unassociated with Vedic rituals. By ignoring those duties of the householders which are prescribed by the Smṛtis, as if they (the duties) were non-existent—even though they are present in fact—, it is said in that context that there can be no Liberation only from Knowledge. (4)

Reply: Even this is contradictory!

Objection: How?

Reply: How can it be understood by discriminating people that, Liberation through Knowledge combined with action (rites and duties) prescribed by the Smṛtis is denied in the case of householders alone, but not with regard to others? Moreover, if, in the case of the *sannyāsins*, actions (rites and duties) prescribed by the Smṛtis have to be combined with Knowledge as a means to Liberation, then even for the householders you should accept the combination of Knowledge with actions sanctioned by the Smṛtis only, not with those sanctioned by the Vedas. On the other hand, if it be held that for Liberation, Knowledge has to be combined with actions sanctioned by the Vedas *and* the Smṛtis in the case of the householders only, but for the *sannyāsins* the combination has to be with actions sanctioned by the Smṛtis alone, then, in that case, on the householder's head will be placed the burden of much exertion in the form of greatly painful actions prescribed by the Vedas and the Smṛtis!

Again, if it be argued that Liberation will be attained by householders alone on account of their undertaking tasks requiring much diligence, but people in other stages of life will not have It because of their non-performance of the Vedic and the daily obligatory duties (*nitya-karma*, prescribed by the Smṛtis), then that too is wrong since, with regard to the seekers of Liberation, renunciation of all actions has been prescribed as an accessory of Knowledge by all the Upaniṣads, History, Purāṇas and Yoga-scriptures. And this follows also from the sanction in the Vedas and the Smṛtis for following the stage of life either optionally or successively. (5)

Objection: In that case, is it the conclusion that Knowledge and action should be combined by people in all stages of life?

Reply: No, because it is enjoined in the Upaniṣadic texts that a man aspiring for Liberation should give up all actions:

'(Knowing this very Self the Brāhmaṇas) renounce (the desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds), and lead a mendicant life' (Bṛ. 3.5.1; also see 4.4.22);

'Therefore they speak of monasticism as something surpassing all these austerities' (Ma. Nā. 24.1);

'Monasticism verily became supreme' (ibid. 21.2);

‘The few who obtained Immortality did so not through action, nor progeny, nor wealth, but through renunciation alone’ (ibid. 10.5; Kai. 2); (6) and,

‘One should take to monasticism from the stage of Celibacy itself’ (Jā. 4), etc.

Besides, (in the Smṛti) it is said:

‘Give up religion and irreligion, give up both the real and the unreal. After renouncing both the real and the unreal, give up that (7) through which they are renounced’ (Mbh. Śā. 329.40; 331.44).

And Bṛhaspati said to Kaca: ‘Noticing that the phenomenal world is verily hollow, and desiring to realize the Essence (Brahman), they, even while remaining unmarried, take to monasticism by embracing supreme renunciation.’ (8)

(Vyāsa’s) instruction to Śuka is this:

‘A being gets bound down by actions, and he is liberated by Illumination. Therefore, the *sannyāsins* who have realized the Transcendental (Self) do not undertake any action (rites and duties)’ (Mbh. Śā. 241.7).

Here also occurs the text, ‘having given up all actions mentally,’ etc. (5.13). Further, as Liberation is not a result (of action), actions become useless for one aspiring for Liberation.

Objection: May it not be argued that the daily obligatory duties (*nitya-karmas*) have to be performed so as to avoid sin? (9)

Reply: No, because the incurring of sin concerns those who are not monks. As by not performing rituals etc. connected with fire, sin accrues even to the Brahmacārins who are performers of rites and duties and are not monks, it certainly cannot be imagined similarly with regard to a *sannyāsin*. (10) For that matter, neither can it be imagined that sin which is a positive entity can be generated from the mere absence of daily obligatory duties (*nitya-karmas*), because of the Upaniṣadic text, ‘How can existence come out of non-existence?’ (Ch. 6.2.2), which speaks of the impossibility of the birth of existence from non-existence. Should the Vedas speak even of the

impossible, that sin accrues from the non-performance of enjoined rites, then it will amount to saying that the Vedas are a source of evil and hence invalid! For the result of either doing or not doing what is enjoined would be pain. (11) And thereby an illogical conjecture would have been made that the scriptures are creative and not informative. (12) And this is not desirable. Therefore, rites and duties are not for monks. Hence, the combination of Knowledge and action does not stand to reason.

Moreover, Arjuna's question, 'If it be Your opinion that Wisdom is superior to action,' etc. becomes unjustifiable. For, if it be that the Lord had said in the second chapter, 'Knowledge and action, in combination, have to be pursued by you', then Arjuna's question, 'O Janārdana, if it be Your opinion that Wisdom is superior to action,' etc. becomes unreasonable. Had it been said to Arjuna, 'Wisdom and action are to be practised by you', then that Wisdom which is superior to action also stands stated as a matter of course. In that case, Arjuna's (13) question, 'why then do you urge me to horrible action?', cannot in any way be logical. Nor can it be reasonably imagined that the Lord had said earlier that wisdom which is superior should not be practised by Arjuna alone, from which could arise the question, 'If it be Your opinion that Wisdom is superior to action…?' (14)

Again, had it been stated earlier by the Lord that Knowledge and actions are to be pursued by different persons since they, owing to mutual contradiction, cannot be simultaneously pursued by one and the same person, then only would this question, 'If it be Your opinion,' etc. become logical. Even if it be supposed that the question has been put owing to non-discrimination, still, the Lord's reply that they (Knowledge and action) are to be pursued by different persons does not become rational. Besides, it should not be imagined that the Lord's answer is given out of His misunderstanding. And from these considerations, since the Lord's answer is seen to be that the steadfastness in Knowledge and in action are meant for different persons, therefore it follows that combination of Knowledge and action is illogical. Hence, the well-ascertained conclusion in the *Gītā* and all the Upaniṣads is that Liberation follows from Knowledge alone.

Further, if it were possible to combine both of them, then the prayer, 'Tell me for certain one of these,' with regard to either Knowledge or

action, becomes inconsistent. And by His emphatic statement, ‘Therefore you undertake action itself’ (4.15), the Lord will show the impossibility for Arjuna to be steadfast in Knowledge.

Arjuna said:

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन।
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव॥१॥

1. O Janārdana (Kṛṣṇa), if it be Your opinion that wisdom is superior to action, why then do you urge me to horrible action, O Keṣava?

O Janārdana, *cet*, if it be; *te*, Your; *matā*, opinion, intention; that *buddhiḥ*, Wisdom; *jyāyasī*, is superior; *karmaṇaḥ*, to action—.

If the combination of Wisdom and action be intended (by the Lord), then the means to Liberation is only one. (15) In that case, Arjuna would have done something illogical in separating Wisdom from action by saying that Wisdom is superior to action. For, that (Wisdom or action, which is a constituent of the combination) cannot be greater than that (combination, even) from the point of view of the result. (16) Similarly, what Arjuna said by way of censuring the Lord, as it were, in, ‘It has been stated by the Lord that Wisdom is superior to action, and He exhorts me saying, “Undertake action,” which is a source of evil! What may be the reason for this?’, and also in, ‘*Tatkim*, why then, O Keśava; *niyojayasi*, do You urge; *mām*, me; to *ghore*, horrible, cruel; *karmaṇi*, action; involving injury?’—that (censure) also does not become reasonable.

On the other hand, (17) if it be supposed that the combination (of Knowledge) with action sanctioned only by the Smṛtis has been enjoined for all by the Lord, and Arjuna also comprehended (accordingly), then, how can the statement, ‘Why then do You urge me to horrible action’, be rational?

Besides,

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम्॥२॥

2. You bewilder my understanding, as it were, by a seemingly conflicting statement! Tell me for certain one of these by which I may attain the highest Good.

'Though the Lord speaks lucidly, still, to me who am of a dull understanding, the Lord's utterance appears to be conflicting.' '*Mohayasi*, You bewilder; *me*, my; *buddhim*, understanding; *iva*, as it were; *vyāmiśreṇa iva*, by that seemingly conflicting; *vākyena*, statement! You have surely undertaken to dispel the confusion of my understanding; but why do You bewilder (it)? Hence I say, "You bewilder my understanding, as it were."'

However, if You (18) think that it is impossible for a single person to pursue both Knowledge and action, which can be undertaken (only) by different persons, then, that being the case, *vada*, tell me; *niścitya*, for certain; *tadekam*, one of these, either Knowledge or action: "This indeed is fit for Arjuna, according to his understanding, strength, and situation"; *yena*, by which, by one of either Knowledge or action; *aham*, I; *āpnuyām*, may attain; *śreyaḥ*, the highest Good.'

Even if Knowledge had been spoken of at all by the Lord as being subsidiary to steadfastness in action, how then could there be the desire in Arjuna to know of only one of them, as expressed in 'Tell me one of these two?' Certainly the Lord did not say, 'I shall speak of only one among Knowledge and action, but surely not of both', owing to which, Arjuna, considering it impossible for himself to acquire both, should have prayed for one only!

The answer was in accordance with the question:

The Blessed Lord said:

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम्॥३॥

3. O unblemished one, two kinds of steadfastness in this world were spoken of by Me in the days of yore—through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization; through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs.

Anagha, O unblemished one, O sinless one; (19) *dvividhā*, two kinds of; *niṣṭhā*, steadfastness, persistence in what is undertaken; *asmin loke*, in this world, for the people of the three castes who are qualified for following the scriptures; *proktā*, were spoken of; *mayā*, by Me, the omniscient God, who had revealed for them the traditional teachings of the Vedas, which are the means of securing prosperity and the highest Goal; *purā*, in the days of yore, in the beginning of creation, after having brought into being the creatures.

Now then, which is that steadfastness of two kinds? In answer the Lord says: The steadfastness *jñānayogena*, through the Yoga of Knowledge—Knowledge itself being the Yoga (20)—; had been stated *sāṅkhyānām*, for the men of realization—those possessed of the Knowledge arising from the discrimination with regard to the Self and the not-Self, those who have espoused monasticism from the stage of Celibacy itself, those to whom the entity presented by the Vedāntic knowledge has become fully ascertained (see Mu. 3.2.6)—, the monks who are known as the *parama-haṁsas*, those who are established in Brahman alone. And the steadfastness *karma-yogena*, through the Yoga of Action—action itself being the Yoga; (21) had been stated *yoginām*, for the yogīs, the men of action (rites and duties). This is the idea.

Again, had it been intended or stated or if it will be stated in the *Gītā* by the Lord—and if it has also been so stated in the Vedas—that Knowledge and action are to be practised in combination by one and the same person for attaining the same human Goal, why then should He here tell His dear supplicant Arjuna, that steadfastness in either Knowledge or action is to be practised only by different persons who are respectively qualified? If, on the other hand, it be supposed that the Lord's idea is, 'After hearing about both Knowledge and action, Arjuna will himself practise them (in combination); but, to others, I shall speak of them as being meant to be pursued by different persons', then the Lord would be imagined to be unreliable, being possessed of likes and dislikes! And that is untenable.

So, from no point of view whatsoever can there be a combination of Knowledge and action. And what has been said by Arjuna regarding superiority of Wisdom over action, that stands confirmed for not having

been refuted; and (it also stands confirmed) that steadfastness in Knowledge is suitable for being practised by monks alone. And from the statement that they (Knowledge and action) are to be followed by different persons, it is understood that this has the Lord’s approval.

Noticing that Arjuna had become dejected under the impression, ‘You are urging me to that very action which is a source of bondage’, and was thinking thus, ‘I shall not undertake action’, the Lord said, ‘*Na karmaṇām anārambhāt*, not by abstaining from action,’ etc.

Or:—When steadfastness in Knowledge and steadfastness in action become incapable of being pursued simultaneously by one and the same person owing to mutual contradiction, then, since it may be concluded that they become the cause of attaining the human Goal independently of each other, therefore, in order to show—that the steadfastness in action is a means to the human Goal, not independently, but by virtue of being instrumental in securing steadfastness in Knowledge; and that, on the other hand, steadfastness in Knowledge, having come into being through the means of steadfastness in action, leads to the human Goal independently without anticipating anything else—, the Lord said:

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति॥४॥

4. A person does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from action; nor does he attain fulfilment merely through renunciation.

Puruṣaḥ, a person; *na* does not; *aśnute*, attain; *naiṣkarmyam*, freedom from action, the state of being free from action, steadfastness in the Yoga of Knowledge, that is the state of abiding in one’s own Self which is free from action; *anārambhāt*, by abstaining; *karmaṇām*, from actions—by the non-performance of actions such as sacrifices etc. which are or were performed in the present or past lives, which are the causes of the purification of the mind by way of attenuating the sins incurred, and which, by being the cause of that (purification), become the source of steadfastness in Knowledge through the generation of Knowledge, as stated in the Smṛti (text), ‘Knowledge arises in a person from the attenuation of sinful acts’ (22) (Mbh. Śā. 204.8). This is the import.

From the statement that one does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from actions, it may be concluded that one attains freedom from action by following the opposite course of performing actions. What, again, is the reason that one does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from actions? The answer is: Because performing actions is itself a means to freedom from action. Indeed, there can be no attainment of an end without (its) means. And Karma-yoga is the means to the Yoga of Knowledge characterized by freedom from action, because it has been so established in the Upaniṣads and here as well. As for the Upaniṣads, it has been shown in the texts, 'The Brāhmaṇas seek to know It through the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, (charity, and austerity consisting in a dispassionate enjoyment of sense-objects)' (Bṛ. 4.4.22), etc. which deal with the means of realizing the goal of Knowledge under discussion, namely the Realm of the Self, that the Yoga of Karma is a means to the Yoga of Knowledge. And even here (in the *Gītā*), the Lord will establish that, 'But, O mighty-armed one, renunciation is hard to attain without (Karma-)yoga' (5.6); 'By giving up attachment, the yogīs undertake work ... for the purification of themselves' (5.11); 'Sacrifice, charity, and austerity are verily the purifiers of the wise' (18.5), etc.

Objection: Is it not that in such texts as—'Extending to all creatures immunity from fear' (Nā. Par. 5.43), (one should take recourse to freedom from action)—, it is shown that attainment of freedom from action follows even from the renunciation of obligatory duties? And in the world, too, it is a better known fact that freedom from action follows abstention from actions. Hence also arises the question, 'Why should one who desires freedom from action undertake action?'

Reply: Therefore the Lord said: *Na ca*, nor; *samadhi-gacchati*, does he attain; *siddhim*, fulfilment, steadfastness in the Yoga of Knowledge, characterized by freedom from action; *sannyasanāt eva*, merely through renunciation—even from the mere renunciation of actions which is devoid of Knowledge.

What, again, is the reason that by the mere giving up of actions which is not accompanied with Knowledge, a person does not attain fulfilment in the

form of freedom from actions? To this query seeking to know the cause, the Lord says:

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः॥५॥

5. Because, no one ever remains even for a moment without doing work. For all are made to work under compulsion by the *guṇas* born of Nature.

Hi, because; *na kaścit*, no one; *jātu*, ever; *tiṣṭhati*, remains; *api*, even; for so much time as a *kṣaṇam*, moment; *akarma-kṛt*, without doing work. Why? *Hi*, for; *sarvaḥ*, all creatures; *kāryate karma*, are made to work; verily *avaśaḥ*, under compulsion; *guṇaiḥ*, by the *guṇas*—*sattva* (goodness); *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (mental darkness); *prakṛti-jaiḥ*, born of Nature. The word 'unenlightened' has to be added to the sentence, since the men of realization have been spoken of separately in, 'who is not distracted by the three *guṇas* (qualities)' (14.23). For Karma-yoga is meant only for the unenlightened, not for the men of Knowledge. Karma-yoga, on the other hand, is not pertinent for the men of Knowledge who, because of their not moving away from their own Self, are not shaken by the *guṇas*. This has been explained similarly in, 'he who has known this One as indestructible' (2.21).

But, if one who is not a knower of the Self does not perform prescribed action, then this is certainly bad. Hence the Lord says:

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन्।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते॥६॥

6. One, who after withdrawing the organs of action, sits mentally recollecting the objects of the senses, that one, of deluded mind, is called a hypocrite.

Yaḥ, one who; *samyamya*, after withdrawing; *karma-indriyāṇi*, the organs of action—hands etc.; *āste*, sits; *manasā*, mentally; *smaran*, recollecting, thinking; *indriya-arthān*, the objects of the senses; *saḥ*, that one; *vimūḍha-ātmā*, of deluded mind; *ucyate*, is called; *mithyā-ācāraḥ*, a hypocrite, a sinful person.

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन।
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते॥७॥

7. But, O Arjuna, one who engages in Karma-yoga with the organs of action, controlling the organs with the mind and becoming unattached—that one excels.

Tu, but, on the other hand, O Arjuna; *yaḥ*, one who is unenlightened and who is eligible for action; *ārabhate*, engages in;—what does he engage in? The Lord says in answer—*karma-yogam*, Karma yoga; *karma-indriyaiḥ*, with the organs of action, with speech, hands, etc.; *niyamya*, controlling; *indriyāṇi*, the sense-organs; *manasā*, with the mind; and becoming *asaktaḥ* unattached; (23) *saḥ*, that one; *viśiṣyate*, excels the other one, the hypocrite.

This being so, therefore,

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः॥८॥

8. You perform the obligatory duties, for action is superior to inaction. And, through inaction, even the maintenance of your body will not be possible.

Tvam, you, O Arjuna; *kuru*, perform; *niyatam*, the obligatory; *karma*, duties, those daily obligatory duties (*nitya-karmas*) for which one is competent (according to the scriptures), and which are not heard of (24) as productive of any result; *hi*, for, from the point of view of result; *karma*, action; is *jyāyaḥ*, superior; *akarmaṇaḥ*, to inaction, to non-performance (of duties). Why? *Ca*, and; *akarmaṇaḥ*, through inaction; *api*, even; *te śarīra-yātrā*, the maintenance of your body; *na prasiddhyet*, will not be possible. Therefore, the distinction between action and inaction is obvious in this world.

'And as regards your idea that action should not be undertaken because it leads to bondage—that too is wrong.' How?

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः।
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर॥९॥

9. This man becomes bound by actions other than that action meant for God. Without being attached, O son of Kuntī, you perform actions for Him.

Ayam, this; *lokaḥ*, man, the one who is eligible for action; *karma-bandhanaḥ*, becomes bound by actions—the person who has karma as his bondage (*bandhana*) is *karma-bandhanaḥ*—; *anyatra*, other than; that *karmanaḥ*, action; *yajñārthāt*, meant for God; not by that meant for God. According to the Vedic text, 'Sacrifice is verily Viṣṇu' (Tai. Saṁ. 1.7.4), *yajñaḥ* means God; whatever is done for Him is *yajñārtham*.

Therefore, *mukta-saṅgaḥ*, without being attached, being free from attachment to the results of actions; O son of Kuntī, *samācara*, you perform; *karma*, actions; *tadartham*, for Him, for God.

An eligible person should engage in work for the following reason also:

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक्॥१०॥

10. In the days of yore, having created the beings together with the sacrifices, Prajāpati said: 'By this you multiply. Let this be your yielder of coveted objects of desire.'

Purā, in the days of yore, in the beginning of creation; *sṛṣṭvā*, having created; *prajāḥ*, the beings, the people of the three castes; *saha-yajñāḥ*, together with the sacrifices; Prajāpati, the creator of beings, *uvāca*, said; '*Anena*, by this sacrifice; *prasaviṣyadhvam*, you multiply.' *Prasava* means origination, growth. 'You accomplish that. *Eṣaḥ astu*, let this sacrifice be; *vaḥ*, your; *iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*, yielder of coveted objects of desire.' That which yields (*dhuk*) coveted (*iṣṭa*) objects of desire (*kāma*), particular results, is *iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk*.

How?

देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ॥११॥

11. 'You nourish the gods with this. Let those gods nourish you. Nourishing one another, you shall attain the supreme Good.'

‘*Bhāvayata*, you nourish; *devān*, the gods, Indra and others; *anena*, with this sacrifice. Let *te devāḥ*, those gods; *bhāvayantu*, nourish; *vaḥ*, you—make you contented with rainfall etc. Thus *bhāvayantaḥ*, nourishing; *parasparam*, one another; *avāpsyatha*, you shall attain; the *param*, supreme; *sreyaḥ*, Good, called Liberation, through the attainment of Knowledge;’ or, ‘you shall attain heaven—which is meant by *param śreyaḥ*.’ (25)

Moreover,

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः॥१२॥

12. ‘Being nourished by sacrifices, the gods will indeed give you the coveted enjoyments. He is certainly a thief who enjoys what have been given by them without offering (these) to them.’

‘*Yajña-bhāvitāḥ*, being nourished, that is being satisfied, by sacrifices; *devāḥ*, the gods; *dāsyante hi*, will indeed give, will distribute; among *vaḥ*, you; the *iṣṭān*, coveted; *bhogān*, enjoyments, such as wife, children, and cattle. *Saḥ*, he; is *eva*, certainly; a *stenaḥ*, thief, a stealer of the wealth of gods and others; *yaḥ*, who; *bhuṅkte*, enjoys, gratifies only his own body and organs; with *dattān*, what enjoyable things have been given; *taiḥ*, by them, by the gods; *apradāya*, without offering (these); *ebhyaḥ*, to them, that is without repaying the debt (26) to them.’

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः।
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात्॥१३॥

13. By becoming partakers of the remnants of sacrifices, they become freed from all sins. But the unholy persons who cook for themselves, they incur sin.

Those again, who are *yajña-śiṣṭa-aśinaḥ*, partakers of the remnants of sacrifices, who, after making offering to the gods and others, (27) are habituated to eat the remnants (of those offerings), called nectar; they, *santaḥ*, by being (so); *mucyante*, become freed; *sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ*, from all sins—from those sins incurred through the five things, (28) namely oven etc., and also from those others incurred owing to injury etc., caused

inadvertently. *Tu*, but; the *pāpāḥ*, unholy persons, who are selfish; *ye*, who; *pacanti*, cook; *ātma-kāraṇāt*, for themselves; *te*, they, being themselves sinful; *bhuñjate*, incur; *agham*, sin.

For the following reasons also actions should be undertaken by an eligible person. Action is definitely the cause of the movement of the wheel of the world. How? This is being answered:

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः॥१४॥

14. From food are born the creatures; the origin of food is from rainfall; rainfall originates from sacrifice; sacrifice has action as its origin.

It is a matter of direct perception that *annāt*, from food, which is eaten and is transformed into blood and semen; *bhavanti*, are born; *bhūtāni*, the creatures. *Anna-sambhavaḥ*, the origin of food; is *parjanyāt*, from rainfall. *Parjanyaḥ*, rainfall; *bhavati*, originates; from *yajñāt*, from sacrifice. This accords with the Smṛti, 'The oblation properly poured into fire reaches the sun. From the sun comes rain, from rain comes food, and from that the creatures' (Ma. Sm. 3.76). (Here) sacrifice means its unique [29] result. And that sacrifice, that is the unique result, which arises (*samudbhavaḥ*) from action (*karma*) undertaken by the priest and the sacrificer, is *karma-samudbhavaḥ*; it has action for its origin.

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम्।
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम्॥१५॥

15. Know that action has the Veda as its origin; the Vedas has the Immutable as its source. Hence, the all-pervading Veda is for ever based on sacrifice.

Again, [30] *viddhi*, know; that karma, action; is *brahmodbhavam*, it has Brahma, the Veda, as its *udbhavam*, origin. [31] Further, Brahma, called the Veda, is *akṣara-samudbhavam*, it has *akṣara*, the Immutable, Brahman, the supreme Self, as its source. This is the meaning. Since the Veda came out, like the breath of a man, from the supreme Self Itself, called the Immutable, therefore the Veda, being the revealer of everything, is *sarva-gatam*, all-pervading. Even though all-pervading, the Veda is *nityam*, for ever;

pratiṣṭhitam, based; *yajñe*, on sacrifice, because the injunctions about sacrifices predominate in it.

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति॥१६॥

16. O Pārtha, he lives in vain who does not follow here the wheel thus set in motion, whose life is sinful, and who indulges in the senses.

O Pārtha, *saḥ*, he; *jīvati*, lives; *mogham*, in vain; *yaḥ*, who, though competent for action; *na anuvartayati*, does not follow; *iha*, here, in the world; *cakram*, the wheel of the world; *evam*, thus; *pravartitam*, set in motion, by God, on the basis of the Vedas and the sacrifices; *aghāyuḥ*, whose life (*āyuḥ*) is sinful (*agham*), that is whose life is vile; and *indriya-ārāmaḥ*, who indulges in the senses—who has his *ārāma*, sport, enjoyment, with objects, *indriyaiḥ*, through the senses.

Therefore, the gist of the topic under discussion is that action must be undertaken by one who is qualified (for action) but is unenlightened. In the verses beginning from, ‘A person does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from action’ (4) and ending with, ‘You perform the obligatory duties…. And, through inaction, even the maintenance of your body will not be possible’ (8), it has been proved that before one attains fitness for steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self, it is the bounden duty of a person who is qualified for action, but is not enlightened, to undertake Karma-yoga for that purpose. And then, also in the verses commencing from ‘(This man becomes bound) by actions other than that action meant for God’ (9) and ending with ‘O Pārtha, he lives in vain,’ many reasons (32) have been incidentally stated as to why a competent person has to undertake actions; and the evils arising from their non-performance have also been emphatically declared.

Such being the conclusion, the question arises whether the wheel thus set in motion should be followed by all, or only by one who is ignorant of the Self and has not attained to the steadfastness which is fit to be practised by the Sāṅkhyas, the knowers of the Self, through the Yoga of Knowledge only, and which is acquired by one ignorant of the Self through the means of the practice of Karma-yoga mentioned above? Either anticipating

Arjuna's question to this effect, or in order to make the meaning of the scripture (*Gītā*) clearly understood, the Lord, revealing out of His own accord that the following substance of the Upaniṣads—Becoming freed from false knowledge by knowing this very Self, the Brāhmaṇas renounce what is a compulsory duty for those having false knowledge, namely, desire for sons, etc., and then lead a mendicant life just for the purpose of maintaining the body; they have no duty to perform other than steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self (cf. Bṛ. 3.5.1)—has been presented here in the *Gītā*, says:

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते॥१७॥

17. But that man who rejoices only in the Self and is satisfied with the Self, and is contented only in the Self—for him there is no duty to perform.

Tu, but; that *mānavaḥ*, man, the *sannyāsin*, the man of Knowledge, steadfast in the knowledge of the Self; *yaḥ*, who; *ātmaratiḥ eva syāt*, rejoices only in the Self—not in the sense objects; and *ātma-tṛptaḥ*, who is satisfied only with the Self—not with food and drink; and is *santuṣṭaḥ*, contented; *eva*, only; *ātmani*, in the Self; *tasya*, for him; *na vidyate*, there is no; *kāryam*, duty (33) to perform. (34)

All people surely feel contented by acquiring an external thing. But this one, without depending on it, remains contented only with the Self; that is to say, he remains detached from everything. The idea is that, for a man who is such a knower of the Self, there is no duty to undertake.

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः॥१८॥

18. For him there is no concern here at all with performing action; nor any (concern) with non-performance. Moreover, for him there is no dependence on any object to serve any purpose.

Moreover, *tasya*, for him, who rejoices in the supreme Self; *na*, there is no; *artham*, concern; *eva*, at all; *kṛtena*, with performing action.

Objection: In that case, let there be some evil called sin owing to non-performance!

Reply: *Iha*, here, in this world; *na*, nor is there; for him *kaścana*, any (concern); *akṛtena*, with non-performance. Certainly there is no evil in the form of incurring sin or in the form of self-destruction. *Ca*, moreover; *asya*, for him; *na asti*, there is no; *kaścit artha-vyapāśrayaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu*, dependence on any object, from Brahmā to an unmoving thing, to serve any purpose. *Vyapāśrayaḥ* is the same as *vyapāśrayaṇam*, dependence, which is possible of being created by action prompted by necessity. (For him) there is no end to gain by depending on any particular object, due to which there can be some action for that purpose.

'You (Arjuna) are not established in this fullest realization which is comparable to a flood all around.'

तस्मादसक्त: सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर।
असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुष:॥१९॥

19. Therefore, remaining unattached, always perform the obligatory duty, for, by performing (one's) duty without attachment, a person attains the Highest.

Since this is so, therefore, *asaktaḥ*, remaining unattached; *samācara*, perform; *satatam*, always; *kāryam*, the obligatory; daily *karma*, duty; *hi*, for; *ācaran*, by performing; (one's) *karma*, duty; *asaktaḥ*, without attachment, by doing work as a dedication to God; *puruṣaḥ*, a person; *āpnoti*, attains; *param*, the Highest, Liberation, through the purification of the mind. This is meaning.

And (you should perform your duty) for the following reason also:

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादय:।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि॥२०॥

20. For Janaka and others strove to attain Liberation through action itself. You ought to perform (your duties) keeping also in view the prevention of mankind from going astray.

Hi, for; in the olden days, the learned Kṣatriyas, *janakādayaḥ*, Janaka and others such as Aśvapati; *āsthitāḥ*, strove to attain; *saṁsiddhim*, Liberation; *karmaṇā eva*, through action itself.

If it be that they were possessed of the fullest realization, then the meaning is that they remained established in Liberation while continuing, because of past momentum, to be associated with action itself—without renouncing it—with a view to preventing mankind from going astray. Again, if (it be that) Janaka and others had not attained fullest realization, then, they gradually became established in Liberation through action which is a means for the purification of the mind. The verse is to be explained thus.

On the other hand, if you think, 'Obligatory duty was performed even by Janaka and others of olden days who were surely unenlightened. (35) There by it does not follow that action has to be undertaken by somebody else who has the fullest enlightenment and has reached his Goal', nevertheless, *tvam*, you, who are under the influence of past actions; *arhasi*, ought; *kartum*, to perform (your duties); *sampaśyan api*, keeping also in view; *loka-saṅgraham*, (36) the prevention of mankind from going astray; even that purpose.

By whom, and how, is mankind to be prevented from going astray? That is being stated: (37)

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते॥२१॥

21. Whatever a superior person does, another person does that very thing! Whatever he upholds as authority, an ordinary person follows that.

Yat yat, (38) whatever action; a *śreṣṭhaḥ*, superior person, a leader; *ācarati*, does; *itaraḥ*, another; *janaḥ*, person, who follows him; does *tat tat eva*, that very action. Further, *yat*, whatever; *saḥ*, he, the superior person; *kurute*, upholds; as *pramāṇam*, authority, be it Vedic or secular; *lokaḥ*, an ordinary person; *anuvartate*, follows; *tat*, that, that is he accepts that very thing as authoritative.

‘If you have a doubt here with regard to the duty of preventing people from straying, then why do you not observe Me?’

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि॥२२॥

22. In all the three worlds, O Pārtha, there is no duty whatsoever for Me (to fulfil); nothing remains unachieved or to be achieved. (39) (Still) do I continue in action.

O Pārtha, *na asti*, there is no; *kartavyam*, duty; *kiñcana*, whatsoever; *me*, for Me (to fulfil); even *triṣu lokeṣu*, in all the three worlds. Why? There is *na anavāptam*, nothing (that remains) unachieved; or *avāptavyam*, to be achieved. Still *varte eva*, do I continue; *karmaṇi*, in action.

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः॥२३॥

23. For, O Pārtha, if at any time I do not continue (40) vigilantly in action, men will follow My path in every way.

Again, O Pārtha, *yadi*, if; *jātu*, at any time; *aham*, I; *na*, do not; *varteyam*, continue; *atandritaḥ*, vigilantly, untiringly; *karmaṇi*, in action; *manuṣyāḥ*, men: *anuvartante*, will follow; *mama*, My; *vartma*, path; *sarvaśaḥ*, in every way, I being the Highest.

And if that be so, what is the harm? In reply the Lord says: (41)

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम्।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः॥२४॥

24. These worlds will be ruined if I do not perform action. And I shall become the agent of intermingling (of castes), and shall be destroying these beings.

Cet, if; *aham*, I; *na kuryām*, do not perform; *karma*, action; all *ime*, these; *lokāḥ*, worlds; *utsīdeyuḥ*, will be ruined, owing to the absence of work responsible for the maintenance of the worlds. *Ca*, and, further; *syām*, I shall become; *kartā*, the agent; *saṅkarasya*, of intermingling (of castes). Consequently, *upahanyām*, I shall be destroying; *imāḥ*, these; *prajāḥ*,

beings. That is to say, I who am engaged in helping the creatures, shall be destroying them. This would be unbefitting of Me, who am God.

'On the other hand, if, like Me, you or some one else possesses the conviction of having attained Perfection and is a knower of the Self, it is a duty of such a one, too, to help others even if there be no obligation on his own part.'

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम्॥२५॥

25. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, as the unenlightened people act with attachment to work, so should the enlightened person act, without attachment, being desirous of the prevention of people from going astray.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *yathā*, as; some *avidvāṁsaḥ*, unenlightened people; *kurvanti*, act; *saktāḥ*, with attachment; *karmaṇi*, to work, (thinking) 'The reward of this work will accrue to me'; *tathā*, so; should *vidvān*, the enlightened person, the knower of the Self; *kuryāt*, act; *asaktaḥ*, without attachment, remaining unattached. (42) Why does he (the enlightened person) act like him (the former)? Listen to that: *Cikīrṣuḥ*, being desirous of achieving; *lokasaṅgraham*, prevention of people from going astray.

'Neither for Me who am a knower of the Self, nor for any other (knower of the Self) who wants thus prevent people from going astray, is there any duty apart from working for the welfare of the world. Hence, the following advice is being given to such a knower of the Self:'

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम्।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन्॥२६॥

26. The enlightened man should not create disturbance in the beliefs of the ignorant, who are attached to work. Working, while himself remaining diligent, (43) he should make them do (44) all the duties.

Vidvān, the enlightened man; *na janayet*, should not create; *buddhi-bhedam*, disturbance in the beliefs—disturbance in the firm belief, 'This has to be done; and the result of this action is to be reaped by me'; *ajñānām*, of

the ignorant, of the non-discriminating ones; *karma-saṅginām*, who are attached to work. But what should he do? Himself *samācaran*, working, performing those very activities of the ignorant; *yuktaḥ*, while remaining diligent; *joṣayet*, he should make them do; *sarva-karmāṇi*, all the duties.

How does an unillumined, ignorant person become attached to actions? In reply the Lord says:

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते॥२७॥

27. While actions are being done in every way by the *guṇas* (qualities) of Nature, one who is deluded by egoism thinks thus: 'I am the doer.'

Karmāṇi kriyamāṇāni, while actions, secular and scriptural, are being done; *sarvaśaḥ*, in ever way; *guṇaiḥ*, by the *guṇas*, (that is) by the modifications in the form of body and organs; (born) *prakṛteḥ*, of Nature—Nature, (otherwise known as) *Pradhāna*, (45) being the state of equilibrium of the three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha-ātmā*, one who is deluded by egoism; *manyate*, thinks; *iti*, thus; '*Aham kartā*, I am the doer.'

Ahaṅkāra is self-identification with the aggregate of body and organs. He whose *ātmā*, mind, is *vimūḍham*, deluded in diverse ways, by that (*ahaṅkāra*) is *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍha-ātmā*. He who imagines the characteristics of the body and organs to be his own, who has self-identification with the body and the organs, and who, through ignorance, believes the activities to be his own—, he thinks, 'I am the doer of those diverse activities.'

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते॥२८॥

28. But, O mighty-armed one, the one who is a knower of the facts about the varieties of the *guṇas* (qualities) and actions does not become attached, thinking thus: 'The organs rest (act) on the objects of the organs.'

Tu, but, on the other hand; he who is a knower, *tattva-vit*, a knower of the facts;—knower of what kinds of facts?—*guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ*,

about the varieties of the *guṇas* and actions, that is a knower of the diversity of the *guṇas* and the diversity of actions; (46) *na sajjate*, does not become attached; *iti matvā*, thinking thus; '*Guṇāḥ*, the *guṇas* in the form of organs;—not the Self—*vartante*, rest (act); *guṇeṣu*, on the *guṇas* in the form of objects of the organs.'

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान् कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत्॥२९॥

29. Those who are wholly deluded by the *guṇas* of Nature become attached to the activities of the *guṇas*. The knower of the All should not disturb those of dull intellect, who do not know the All.

Those again, *guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ*, who are wholly deluded by the *guṇas*; *prakṛteḥ*, of Nature; *sajjante*, become attached; *guṇa karmasu*, to the activities of the *guṇas*, thinking, 'We do actions for results.' *Kṛtsna-vit*, the knower of the All, one who is himself a knower of the Self; *na vicālayet*, should not disturb; *tān*, those who are attached to actions; (who are) *mandān*, of dull intellect; *akṛtsnavidaḥ*, who do not know the All, who are all attention on the results of actions. Unsettling of beliefs is itself the disturbance. That he should not do. This is the idea.

Again, in what manner should duties be undertaken by a seeker after Liberation who is not enlightened, who is qualified for actions (rites and duties)? As to this, the answer is being stated:

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः॥३०॥

30. Devoid of the fever of the soul, engage in battle by dedicating all actions to Me, with (your) mind intent on the Self, and becoming free from expectations and egoism.

Vigata-jvaraḥ, devoid of the fever of the soul, that is being free from repentance, without remorse; *yuddhyasva*, engage in battle; *sannyasya*, by dedicating; *sarvāṇi*, all; *karmāṇi*, actions; *mayi*, to Me, who am Vāsudeva, the omniscient supreme Lord, the Self of all; *adhyātma-cetasā*, with (your) mind intent on the Self—with discriminating wisdom, with this idea, 'I am an agent, and I work for God as a servant'; and further, *bhūtvā*, becoming;

nirāśīḥ, free from expectations; (47) and *nirmamaḥ*, free from egoism. You from whom has vanished the idea, '(this is) mine', are *nirmamaḥ*.

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः॥३१॥

31. Those men who ever follow this teaching of Mine with faith and without cavil, they also become freed from actions.

Ye, those; *mānavāḥ*, men; who (*nityam*, ever;) *anutiṣṭhanti*, follow accordingly; *me matam*, My teaching—this teaching of Mine, namely that 'duty must be performed', which has been stated with valid reasoning; *sraddhāvantaḥ*, with faith; and *anasūyantaḥ*, without cavil, without detracting Me, Vāsudeva, the Teacher; (48) *te api*, they also, who are such; *mucyante*, become freed; *karmabhiḥ*, from actions called the righteous and the unrighteous.

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम्।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः॥३२॥

32. But those who, decrying (49) this, do not follow My teaching, know them—who are deluded about all knowledge (50) and who are devoid of discrimination—to have gone to ruin.

Tu, but; *ye*, those who are the opposite of them (the former); who *abhyasūyantaḥ*, decrying; *etat*, this instruction of Mine; *na*, do not; *anutiṣṭhanti*, follow; *me*, My; *matam*, teaching, they are deluded in various ways with respect to all knowledge. *Viddhi*, know; *tān*, them; *sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhān*, who are deluded about all knowledge; *acetasaḥ*, who are devoid of discrimination; *naṣṭān*, to have gone to ruin.

'For what reason, again, do they not follow your teachings, perform duties that are not theirs and not follow their own duties? How is it that by remaining opposed to You, they do not fear the evil which will arise from transgressing Your commandments? As to that, the Lord says:

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति॥३३॥

33. Even a man of wisdom behaves according to his own nature. Beings follow (their) nature. What can restraint do?

Api, even; *jñānavān*, a man of wisdom—what to speak of a fool!; *ceṣṭate*, behaves; *sadṛśam*, according to;—what? *svasyāḥ*, his own; *prakṛteḥ*, nature. Nature means the impressions of virtue, vice, etc. (51) acquired in the past (lives) and which become manifest at the commencement of the present life. All creatures (behave) according to that only. Therefore, *bhūtāni*, beings; *yānti*, follow; (their) *prakṛtim*, nature. *Nigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati*, what can restraint do, be it from Me or anybody else?

If all beings behave only according to their own nature—and there is none without his nature—, then, since there arises the contingency of the scriptures becoming purposeless owing to the absence of any scope for personal effort, therefore the following is being stated:

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ॥३४॥

34. Attraction and repulsion are ordained with regard to the objects of all the organs. One should not come under the sway of these two, because they are his adversaries.

Rāga-dveṣau, attraction and repulsion, in the following manner—attraction towards desirable things, and repulsion against undesirable things; (*vyavasthitau*, are ordained,) are sure to occur, *arthe*, with regard to objects such as sound etc.; *indriyasya indriyasya*, of all the organs, with regard to each of the organs.

As to that, the scope of personal effort and scriptural purpose are being stated as follows: One who is engaged in the subject-matter of the scriptures should, in the very beginning, not come under the influence of love and hatred. For, that which is the nature of a person impels him to his actions, verily under the influence of love and hatred. And then follow the rejection of one's own duty and the undertaking of somebody else's duty. On the other hand, when a person controls love and hatred with the help of their opposites, (52) then he becomes mindful only of the scriptural teachings; he ceases to be led by his nature.

Therefore, *na āgacchet*, one should not come; *vaśam*, under the sway; *tayoḥ*, of these two, of love and hatred; *hi* because; *tau*, they; are *asya*, his, this person's *pari-panthinau*, adversaries, who, like robbers, put obstacles on his way to Liberation. This is the meaning.

In this world, one impelled by love and hatred misinterprets even the teaching of the scriptures, and thinks that somebody else's duty, too, has to be undertaken just because it is a duty! That is wrong:

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुण: परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेय: परधर्मो भयावह:॥३५॥

35. One's own duty, (53) though defective, is superior to another's duty well-performed. Death is better while engaged in one's own duty; another's duty is fraught with fear.

Svadharmaḥ, one's own duty; being practised even though *viguṇaḥ*, defective, deficient; is *śreyān*, superior to, more commendable than; *para-dharmāt*, another's duty; though *svanuṣṭhitāt*, well-performed, meritoriously performed. Even *nidhanam*, death; is *śreyaḥ*, better; while engaged *svadharme*, in one's own duty, as compared with remaining alive while engaged in somebody else's duty. Why? *Para-dharmaḥ*, another's duty; is *bhayāvahaḥ*, fraught with fear, since it invites dangers such as hell etc.

Although the root cause of evil was stated in, 'In the case of a person who dwells on objects' (2.62) and '…because they (attraction and repulsion) are his adversaries' (34), that was presented desultorily and vaguely. Wishing to know it briefly and definitely as, 'This is thus, to be sure', Arjuna, with the idea, 'When this indeed becomes known, I shall make effort for its eradication', said:

Arjuna said:

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुष:।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजित:॥३६॥

36. Now then, O scion of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty (Kṛṣṇa), impelled by what does this man commit sin even against his wish, being constrained by force,

as it were?

Atha, now then; *vārṣṇeya*, O scion of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty; being *prayuktaḥ*, impelled; *kena*, by what acting as the cause; as a servant is by a king, does *ayam*, this; *puruṣaḥ*, man; *carati*, commit; *pāpam*, sin, a sinful act; *api*, even; *anicchan*, against his wish, though not himself willing; *niyojitaḥ*, being constrained; *balāt*, by force; *iva*, as it were—as if by a king, which illustration has already been given?

The Lord (*Bhaga-vān*) said: 'You hear about that enemy, the source of all evil, of which you ask—.'

'*Bhaga* is said to consist of all kinds of majesty, virtue, fame, beauty, detachment as well as Liberation, (54) (V.P. 6.5.74). That Vāsudeva, in whom reside for ever, unimpeded and in their fullness, the six qualities of majesty etc. and who has the knowledge of such subjects as creation etc., is called *Bhaga-vān*. 'He is spoken of as *Bhaga-vān* who is aware of creation and dissolution, gain and loss, (55) ignorance and Illumination of all beings' (ibid. 78).

The Blessed Lord said:

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम्॥३७॥

37. This desire, this anger, born of the quality of *rajas*, is a great devourer, a great sinner. Know this to be the enemy here.

Eṣāh, this; *kāmaḥ*, desire, is the enemy of the whole world, because of which the creatures incur all evil. This desire when obstructed in any way turns into anger. Therefore, *krodhaḥ*, anger, is also identical with this (desire). It is *rajoguṇa-samudbhavaḥ*, born of the quality of *rajas*; or, it is the origin of the quality of *rajas*. For, when desire comes into being, it instigates a person by arousing *rajas*. People who are engaged in service etc., which are effects of rajas, and who are stricken with sorrow are heard to lament, 'I have been led to act by desire indeed!' It is *mahā-aśanaḥ*, a great devourer, whose food is enormous. And hence, indeed, it is *mahā-pāpmā*, a great sinner. For a being commits sin when goaded by desire.

Therefore, *viddhi*, know; *enam*, this desire; to be *vairiṇam*, the enemy; *iha*, here in this world.

With the help of examples the Lord explains how it is an enemy:

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथाऽदर्शो मलेन च।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम्॥३८॥

38. As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dirt, and as a foetus remains enclosed in the womb, so is this shrouded by that.

Yathā, as; *vahniḥ*, fire, which is naturally bright; *āvriyate*, is enveloped; *dhūmena*, by smoke, which is born concomitantly (with fire) and is naturally dark; or as *ādarśaḥ*, a mirror; is covered *malena*, by dirt; *ca*, and; *garbhaḥ*, a foetus; is *āvṛtaḥ*, enclosed; *ulbena*, in the womb by the amnion; *tathā*, so; is *idam*, this; *āvṛtam*, shrouded; *tena*, by that.

Again, what is that which is indicated by the word *idam* (this), and which is covered by desire? The answer is:

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च॥३९॥

39. O son of Kuntī, Knowledge is covered by this constant enemy of the wise in the form of desire, which is an insatiable fire.

Jñānam, Knowledge; is *āvṛtam*, covered; *etena*, by this; *nityavairiṇā*, constant enemy; *jñāninaḥ*, of the wise. For the wise person knows even earlier, 'I am being induced by this into evil.' And he always (56) feels distressed. Therefore, it is the constant enemy of the wise but not of a fool. For the fool looks upon desire as a friend so long as hankering lasts. When sorrow comes as a consequence, he realizes, 'I have been driven into sorrow because of longings', but certainly not earlier. Therefore it is the constant enemy of the wise alone.

In what form? *Kāma-rūpeṇa*, in the form of desire—that which has wish itself as its expression is *kāma-rūpa*; in that form—; (and) *duṣpūreṇa*, which is an insatiable; *analena*, fire. That which is difficult to satisfy is *duṣpūraḥ*; and (derivatively) that which never has enough (*alam*) is *analam*.

Again, having what as its abode does desire, in the form of a veil over Knowledge, become the enemy of all? Since when the abode of an enemy is known, it is possible to easily slay the enemy, therefore the Lord says:

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥४०॥

40. The organs, mind, and the intellect are said to be its abode. This one diversely deludes the embodied being by veiling Knowledge with the help of these.

Indriyāṇi, the organs; *manaḥ*, mind; and *buddhiḥ*, the intellect; *ucyate*, are said to be; *asya*, its, desire's; *adhiṣṭhānam*, abode. *Eṣāh*, this one, desire; *vimohayati*, diversely deludes; *dehinam*, the embodied being; *āvṛtya*, by veiling; *jñānam*, Knowledge; *etaiḥ*, with the help of these, with the organs etc. which are its abodes. (57)

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहिह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥४१॥

41. Therefore, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, after first controlling the organs, renounce this one (58) which is sinful and a destroyer of learning and wisdom.

Since this is so, therefore, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *ādau niyamya*, after first controlling; *indriyāṇi*, the organs; *prajahihi*, renounce; *enam*, this one, the enemy under consideration; which is *pāpmānam*, sinful —which is desire that is accustomed to sinning; and *jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*, a destroyer of learning and wisdom, *Jñāna*, learning, means knowledge about the Self etc. from the scriptures and a teacher. *Vijñāna*, wisdom, means the full experience of that.

Renounce, that is discard, from yourself the destroyer of those two—learning and wisdom, which are the means to the achievement of Liberation.

It has been said, 'After first controlling the organs, renounce desire the enemy'. As to that, by taking the support of what should one give up desire? This is being answered:

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्य: परं मन:।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धे: परतस्तु स:॥४२॥

42. They say that the organs are superior (to the gross body); the mind is superior to the organs; but the intellect is superior to the mind. However, the one who is superior to the intellect is He.

The learned ones *āhuḥ*, say; that *indriyāṇi*, the five (59) organs—ear etc., are *parāṇi*, superior, to the external, gross and limited body, from the point of view of subtlety, inner position, pervasiveness, etc. So also, *manaḥ*, the mind, having the nature of thinking and doubting; (60) is *param*, superior; *indriyebhyaḥ*, to the organs. Similarly, *buddhiḥ*, the intellect, having the nature of determination; is *parā*, superior; *manasaḥ*, to the mind. And *yaḥ*, the one who is innermost as compared with all the objects of perception ending with the intellect, and with regard to which Dweller in the body it has been said that desire, in association with its 'abodes' counting from the organs, deludes It by shrouding Knowledge; *saḥ*, that one; is *tu*, however; *parataḥ*, superior; *buddheḥ*, to the intellect—He, the supreme Self, is the witness of the intellect. (61)

एवं बुद्धे: परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम्॥४३॥

43. (62) Understanding the Self thus (63) as superior to the intellect, and completely establishing (the Self) is spiritual absorption with the (help of) the mind, O mighty-armed one, vanquish the enemy in the form of desire, which is difficult to subdue.

Buddhvā, understanding; *ātmānam*, the Self; *evam*, thus; as *param*, superior; *buddheḥ*, to the intellect; and *saṁstabhya*, completely establishing; *ātmanā*, with the mind, that is establishing (the Self) fully in spiritual absorption with the help of your own purified mind; O mighty-armed one, *jahi*, vanquish; this *śatrum*, enemy; *kāma-rūpam*, in the form of desire; which is *durāsadam*, difficult to subdue—which can be got hold of with great difficulty, it being possessed of many inscrutable characteristics.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] See Commentary on 2.10.—Tr.

[2]To understand this controversy, refer to the Commentary on 2.10—Tr.

[3] In the beginning of the third chapter.

[4] The duties sanctioned by the Smṛtis have to be performed by all, irrespective of the stages of life they are in; they are a common factor in the lives of all spiritual aspirants, and hence, their existence need not be considered separately with regard to the householders. So, when it is said that those other than the householders cannot have Liberation from Knowledge alone, it is to be understood that they attain Liberation through Knowledge combined with duties prescribed by the Smṛtis.—Tr.

[5] The *Jabala Upaniṣad* says: 'After completing (the stage of) Celibacy, one should become a householder; from householder-ship he should become an anchorite (lit. a forest-dweller), and then become a mendicant. Or, if it happens otherwise, one should espouse monasticism even from the stage of Celibacy, or from his house (that is from the stage of the Householder), or from the forest' (see Jā. 4.1). The first sentence speaks of successive progress towards monasticism, and the second speaks of optional adoption of monasticism.

Combination of Knowledge with action may be of two kinds, *krama-samuccaya* and *saha-samuccaya*. *Krama-samuccaya* is where an aspirant embraces monasticism by gradually passing through the different stages of life. This is an indirect combination of Knowledge with action (rites and duties). Śaṅkarācārya is ready to concede this in the case of some people. There is also the other alternative of *saha-samuccaya*, where Knowledge is sought to be directly combined with action. Śaṅkarācārya rejects this standpoint totally. The *Jābāla* first speaks of *krama-samuccaya*, and then, by holding that one can become a monk from any stage of life, it rejects *saha-samuccaya*. Besides, there is the Upaniṣadic text, '*yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajet*, one should renounce the very moment

he acquires detachment' (Jā. 4). Ā.G. quotes a Smṛti which, too, says, 'One should have recourse to the stage of life to which he is inclined.'—Tr.

[6] The references to these quotations from the Ma. Nā. are numbered according to C.P.U. According to the Ma. Nā. published from the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, the reference numbers are 79.16, 78.12, and 12.14 respectively.—Tr.

[7] The idea of agentship.

[8] Aṣṭ. omits '*kacam prati*, to Kaca' and notes that this verse occurs in Nā. Par. (3.15) without any reference to Bṛhaspati.—Tr.

[9] Cf.: 'By not performing the enjoined rites, and doing those which are prohibited, and indulging in sense-objects, a man suffers downfall.' (Quoted by Ā.G.)

Rites are divided under three categories—*nitya*, *naimittika*, and *kāmya*. *Nityas* are daily obligatory duties such as Agnihotra, repeating Gāyatrī, etc. every morning and evening; *naimittikas* are occasional duties such as *śrāddha* (obsequies), *prāyaścitta* (expiation), etc.; *kāmyas* are rites performed for some particular purpose and with a view to future fruition, e.g. *kārīri*-sacrifice performed to get rains; *putreṣṭi* done for getting a son; *aśvamedha* for going to heaven.

Nitya-karmas are supposed to yield no result, but their non-performance brings evil. Śaṅkarācārya refutes this theory. According to him *nitya-karmas* have a positive result in as much as they purify the mind, or they lead to heaven.—Tr.

[10] Sin is incurred by one who fails to perform the rites and duties enjoined on him according to his stage of life. A Brahmacārin, whose duty is to study the Vedas and keep the sacred fire burning with fuel, incurs sin by not doing so. But the *sannyāsin* cannot incur sin by the non-performance of what is not his duty.

[11] Performance of rites involves pain such as irritation of the eyes due to smoke, monetary expenses, etc., and non-performance too would produce sin!

[12] The scriptures proceed by accepting the powers of objects as they are known, and not by imparting to them powers they (the objects) do not have. In this sense the Vedas are informative, and not creative.

[13] Here, Aṣṭ. adds '*upālambho vā*, accusation, or'.—Tr.

[14] Aṣṭ. adds '*vivekataḥ*, by making a distinction (between the pursuit of Knowledge and of action)'.—Tr.

[15] The path combining Wisdom and action.

[16] Since what is intended is a combination, therefore, the separation of Knowledge from action, from the point of view of the result, is not justifiable. When Knowledge and action are considered to form together a single means to Liberation, in that case each of them cannot be considered separately as producing its own distinct result. Arjuna's question can be justified only if this separation were possible.

[17] If the opponent's view be that Knowledge is to be combined with rites and duties sanctioned by the Vedas and the Smṛtis in the case of the householders only, whereas for others those sanctioned by the Smṛtis alone are to be combined with Knowledge ..., then ...

[18] In some readings, '*tvam tu*, however, you', is substituted by '*tatra*, as to that'.—Tr.

[19] This word of address suggests that Arjuna is qualified to receive the Lord's instructions.

[20] Here *Jñāna*, Knowledge, refers to the knowledge of the supreme Reality, and Yoga is used in the derivative sense of 'that (Knowledge) through which one gets united with Brahman'.

[21] Yoga here means 'that through which one gets united with, comes to have, prosperity', that is such actions as go by the name of

righteousness and are prescribed by the scriptures.

[22] The whole verse is:

Jñānam utpadyate puṁsāṁkṣayātpāpasya karmaṇaḥ;
Yathādarśatalaprakhye paśyatyātmānamātmani.

'Knowledge arises...acts. One sees the Self in oneself as does one (see oneself) in a cleaned surface of a mirror'.—Tr.

[23] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*phalābhisandhi-varjitaḥ*, free from hankering for results'.—Tr.

[24] Although no result of daily obligatory duties is mentioned in the scriptures, still Śaṇkarācārya holds that it is either heaven or purification of the heart, because something done must have its consequence.—Tr.

[25] The *param śreyaḥ* (supreme Good) will either mean Liberation or heaven in accordance with aspirant's hankering for Liberation or enjoyment.

[26] The three kinds of debt—to the gods, to the *ṛṣis* (sages), and to the manes—are repaid by satisfying them through sacrifices, celibacy (including study of the Vedas, etc.), and procreation, respectively. Unless one repays these debts, he incurs sin.

[27] The *pañca-mahā-yajñas*, five great offerings, which have to be made by every householder are offerings to gods, manes, humans, creatures and *ṛṣis* (sages).

[28] The five things are; oven, water-pot, cutting instruments, grinding machines, and broom. A householder incurs sin by killing insects etc. with these things, knowingly or unknowingly. It is atoned by making the aforesaid five offerings.

[29] Also termed as the unseen result (*adṛṣṭa*).—Tr.

[30] A different reading in place of this is: '*Tat ca vividham karma kuto jātamityāha*, From where did those various kinds of action originate? In reply the Lord says…'. Still another reading is: '*Tat ca*

karma brahmodbhavam iti āha, And the Lord says: That action has the Vedas as its origin.'—vide Ā.Ā., 1936, p. 116.

Aṣṭekar's reading is: *Tat ca evam vidham karma kuto jātamityāha*, And from where has this kind of action originated? The Lord answers this.'—Tr.

[31] Here Aṣṭ. adds 'revealer'—Tr.

[32] Such as, that it pleases God, secures the affection of the gods, etc.

[33] Duty with a view to securing Liberation.

[34] *Rati*, *tṛpti* and *santoṣa*, though synonymous, are used to indicate various types of pleasures. Or, *rati* means attachment to objects; *tṛpti* means happiness arising from contact with some particular object; and *santoṣa* means happiness in general, arising from the acquisition of some coveted object only.

[35] *Ajānadbhiḥ*: This is also translated as, 'surely because they were unenlightened'.—Tr.

[36] V.S.A gives the meanings of the phrase as 'the welfare of the world', and 'propitiation of mankind'.—Tr.

[37] In Aṣṭ. this introductory sentence is as follows: *loka-saṅgrahaḥ kimartham kartavyam iti ucyate*.—Tr.

[38] This is according to the Aṣṭ. The Gī. Pr. reads, *yat yat yeṣu yeṣu*.—Tr.

[39] According to Ś. the translation of this portion is: There is nothing unattained that should be attained.—Tr.

[40] Aṣṭ. and Ā.Ā. read *varteya* instead of *varteyam*.—Tr.

[41] Aṣṭ. omits this sentence completely.—Tr.

[42] Giving up the idea of agentship and the hankering for the rewards of actions to oneself.

[43] Some translate *yuktaḥ* as, 'in the right manner'. S. takes it in the sense of *yoga-yuktaḥ*, merged in yoga.—Tr.

[44] Another reading is *yojayet*, meaning the same as *joṣayet*.—Tr.

[45] *Pradhāna*, *Māyā*, the Power of God.

[46] *Guṇa-vibhāga* means the products of Prakṛti which consists of the three *guṇas*. They are the five subtle elements, mind, intellect, ego, five sensory organs, five motor organs and five objects (sound etc.) of the senses. *Karma-vibhāga* means the varieties of inter-actions among these.—Tr.

[47] 'Free from expectations of results for yourself'.

[48] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*parama*, supreme'—Tr.

[49] Finding fault where there is none.

[50] Knowledge concerning the qualified and the unqualified Brahman.

[51] Also, knowledge, desires, etc.

[52] Ignorance, the cause of love and hatred, has discrimination as its opposite.

[53] Customary or scripturally ordained observances of different castes and sects.—Tr.

[54] *Liberation* stands for its cause, Illumination.

[55] *Gain* and *loss* stand for future prosperity and adversity.

[56] Both at the time when desire arises in him, and also when he is forced to act by it.

[57] The activities of the organs etc. are the media for the expression of desire. Desire covers the Knowledge of the Self by stimulating these.

[58] A variant reading is, '*prajahi hi-enam*, completely renounce this one'.—Tr.

[59] Five sense-organs: of vision, hearing, taste, smell and touch; five motor-organs: hands, feet, speech, and for excretion and generation—these latter five are also understood in the present context.

[60] *Saṅkalpa*: will, volition, intention, thought, reflection, imagination, etc. *vikalpa*: doubt, uncertainty, indecision, suspicion, error, etc.—V.S.A.

[61] The portion, 'with regard to which Dweller ... the supreme Self,' is translated from Aṣṭ. which has the same reading here as the Ā.Ā. The Gī. Pr. makes 'the "abode" counting from the organs' an adjective of 'the Dweller in the body', and omits the portion, 'is *tu*, however ... *buddheḥ*, to the intellect'.—Tr.

[62] The Ast, introduces this verse with, '*Tataḥ kim*, what follows from that?'—Tr.

[63] *Understanding...thus*: that desires can be conquered through the knowledge of the Self.

CHAPTER 4

KNOWLEDGE AND RENUNCIATION OF ACTIONS

This Yoga which has been spoken of in the preceding two chapters, and which is characterized by steadfastness in Knowledge associated with renunciation, can be achieved through Karma-Yoga. The import of the Vedas, characterized by engagement in, and detachment from, action, culminates in it. And this very Yoga is sought to be taught by the Lord in the whole of the *Gītā*. So, considering that the purport of the Vedas stands concluded, the Lord praises it by recounting how it was traditionally handed down:

The Blessed Lord said:

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम्।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत्॥१॥

1. I imparted this imperishable Yoga to Vivasvān. Vivasvān taught this to Manu, and Manu transmitted this to Ikṣvāku.

In the beginning of creation, with a view to infusing vigour into the Kṣatriyas who are the protectors of the world, *aham*, I; *proktavān*, imparted; *imam*, this; *avyayam*, imperishable; *yogam*, Yoga, presented in the (preceding) two chapters; *vivasvate*, to Vivasvān, the Sun. Being endowed with this power of Yoga, they would be able to protect the Brāhmaṇa caste. The protection of the world becomes ensured when the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas are protected.

It (this Yoga) is *avyayam*, imperishable, because its result is undecaying. For, the result—called Liberation—of this (Yoga), which is characterized by steadfastness in perfect Illumination, does not decay. And he, Vivasvān, *prāha*, taught (this); *manave*, to Manu. Manu *abravīt*, transmitted (this); *ikṣvākave*, to Ikṣvāku, his own son who was the first king. (1)

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप॥२॥

2. The king-sages knew this (yoga) which was received thus in regular succession. That Yoga, O destroyer of foes, in now lost owing to a long lapse of time.

Rājarṣayaḥ, the king-sages, those who were kings and sages (at the same time); *viduḥ*, knew; *imam*, this Yoga; which was *evam paramparā-prāptam*, received thus through a regular succession of Kṣatriyas. *Saḥ*, that; *yogaḥ*, Yoga; *naṣṭaḥ*, is lost, has got its traditional line snapped; *iha*, now; *mahatā kālena*, owing to a long lapse of time; *parantapa*, O destroyer of foes. By *para* are meant those against oneself. He who, like the sun, 'scorches' (*tāpayati*) them by the 'rays' of the 'heat' of his prowess is *parantapa*, that is scorcher of antagonists.

Noticing that the Yoga has got lost by reaching people who are weak and have no control of their organs, and that the world has become associated with goals that do not lead to Liberation,

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम्॥३॥

3. That ancient Yoga itself, which is this, has been taught to you by Me today, considering that you are My devotee and friend. For, this (Yoga) is a profound secret.

Saḥ, that; *purātanaḥ*, ancient; *yogaḥ*, Yoga; *eva*, itself; *ayam*, which is this; *proktaḥ*, has been taught; *te*, to you; *mayā*, by Me; *adya*, today; *iti*, considering that; *asi*, you are; *me*, My; *bhaktaḥ*, devotee; *ca sakhā*, and friend. *Hi*, for; *etat*, this Yoga, that is Knowledge; is a *uttamam*, profound; *rahasyam*, secret.

Lest someone should understand that the Lord has said something contradictory, therefore, in order to prevent that (doubt), as though raising a question,

Arjuna said:

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः।
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति॥४॥

4. Your birth was later, (whereas) the birth of Vivasvān was earlier. How am I to understand this that You instructed (him) in the beginning?

Bhavataḥ, Your; *janma*, birth; was *aparam*, later, in the abode of Vasudeva; (whereas) the birth *vivasvataḥ*, of Visvasvān, the Sun; was *param*, earlier, in the beginning of creation. Therefore, *katham*, how; *vijānīyām*, am I to understand; *etat*, this, as not inconsistent; *iti*, that; *tvam*, You, Yourself; who *proktavān*, instructed this Yoga; *ādau*, in the beginning, are the same person who are now teaching me?

By way of demolishing the doubt of fools with regard to Vāsudeva, that He has no God-hood and omniscience—to which very purpose was Arjuna's question—

The Blessed Lord said:

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप॥५॥

5. O Arjuna, many lives of Mine have passed, and so have yours. I know them all, (but) you know not, O scorcher of enemies!

O Arjuna, *bahūni*, many; *janmāni*, lives; *me*, of Mine; *vyatītāni*, have passed; *tava ca*, and so have yours. *Aham*, I; *veda* know; *tāni*, them; *sarvāṇi*, all; (but) *tvam*, you; *na vetta*, know not, due to your power of understanding being obstructed by righteousness, unrighteousness, etc. However, *parantapa*, O scorcher of foes; *aham*, I know, possessing as I do unobstructed power of knowledge, because by nature I am eternal, pure, enlightened and free.

'In that case, how, in spite of the absence of righteousness and unrighteousness, can there be any birth for You who are the eternal God?'

That is being answered:

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन्।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया॥६॥

6. Though I am birthless, undecaying by nature, and the Lord of beings, (still) by subjugating My Prakṛti, I take birth by means of My own Māyā.

Api san ajaḥ, though I am birthless; and *avyaya-ātmā*, undecaying by nature, though I am naturally possessed of an undiminishing power of Knowledge; and so also *api san*, though; *īśvaraḥ*, the Lord, natural Ruler; *bhūtānām*, of beings, from Brahmā to a clump of grass; (still) *adhiṣṭhāya*, by subjugating; *svām*, My own; *prakṛtim*, Prakṛti, the Māyā of Viṣṇu consisting of the three *guṇas*, under whose spell the whole world exists, and deluded by which one does not know one's own Self, Vāsudeva;—by subjugating that Prakṛti of Mine, *sambhavāmi*, I take birth, appear to become embodied, as though born; *ātma-māyayā*, by means of My own Māyā; but not in reality like an ordinary man.

It is being stated when and why that birth occurs:

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्॥७॥

7. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, whenever there is a decline of virtue and increase of vice, then do I manifest Myself.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *yadā yadā hi*, whenever; *bhavati*, there is; a *glāniḥ*, decline, decrease; *dharmasya*, of virtue consisting of the duties of castes and stages of life of living beings, which are the means to achieving prosperity and Liberation; and *abhyutthānam*, increase, rise; *adharmasya*, of vice; *tadā*, then; do *aham*, I; *sṛjāmi*, manifest; *ātmānam*, Myself, through Māyā.

Why?

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे॥८॥

8. For the protection of the pious, the destruction of the evil-doers, and establishing virtue, I manifest Myself in every age.

Paritrāṇāya, for the protection; *sādhūnām*, of the pious, the followers of the virtuous path; *vināśāya*, for the destruction; *duṣkṛtām*, of the evil-doers, of the sinful ones; and also *dharmasaṁsthāpanārthāya*, for establishing virtue fully;—for that purpose, *sambhavāmi*, I manifest Myself; *yuge yuge*, in every age.

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन॥९॥

9. He who thus knows truly the divine birth and actions of Mine does not get rebirth after casting off the body. He attains Me, O Arjuna.

Yaḥ, he who; *evam*, thus, as described; *vetti*, knows *tattvataḥ*, truly, as they are in reality; that *divyam*, divine, supernatural; *janma*, birth, which is a form of Māyā; *ca karma*, and actions, such as protection of the pious, etc.; *mama*, of Mine; *na eti*, does not get; *punarjanma*, rebirth; *tyaktvā*, after casting off; this *deham*, body. *Saḥ*, he; *eti*, attains, comes to; *mām*, Me—he gets Liberated, O Arjuna.

This path of Liberation has not been opened recently. What then? Even in earlier days—

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः॥१०॥

10. Many who were devoid of attachment, fear and anger, who were absorbed in Me, who had taken refuge in Me, and were purified by the austerity of Knowledge, have attained My state.

Bahavaḥ, many; *vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhāḥ*, who were devoid of attachment, fear and anger; *manmayāḥ*, who were absorbed in Me, who were knowers of Brahman, who were seers of (their) identity with God; *mām upāśritāḥ*, who had taken refuge only in Me, the supreme God, that is who were steadfast in Knowledge alone; and were *pūtāḥ*, purified, who had become supremely sanctified; *jñāna-tapasā*, by the austerity of Knowledge —Knowledge itself, about the supreme Reality, being the austerity; becoming sanctified by that austerity of Knowledge—; *āgatāḥ*, have attained; *madbhāvam*, My state, Godhood, Liberation.

The particular mention of 'the austerity of Knowledge' is to indicate that steadfastness in Knowledge does not depend on any other austerity.

'In that case, You have love and aversion, because of which You grant the state of identity with Yourself only to a few but not to others?'

The answer is:

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः॥११॥

11. According to the manner in which they approach Me, I favour them in that very manner. O son of Pṛthā, human beings follow My path in every way.

Yathā, according to the manner in which, the purpose for which, seeking, whatever fruit; *prapadyante*, they approach; *mām*, Me; *aham*, I; *bhajāmi*, favour; *tān*, them; *tathā eva*, in that very manner, by granting that fruit. This is the idea. For they are not seekers of Liberation. It is certainly impossible for the same person to be a seeker of Liberation and, at the same time, a seeker of rewards (of actions).

Therefore, by granting fruits to those who hanker after fruits; by granting Knowledge to those who follow what has been stated (in the scriptures) and are seekers of Liberation, but do not hanker after rewards; and by granting Liberation to those who are men of wisdom and are monks aspiring for Liberation; and so also by removing the miseries of those who suffer—in these ways I favour them just according to the manner, in which they approach Me. This is the meaning. On the other hand, I do not favour anybody out of love or aversion, or out of delusion.

Under all circumstances, O son of Pṛthā, *manuṣyāḥ*, human beings; *anuvartante*, follow; *sarvaśaḥ*, in every way; *mama*, My; *vartma*, path, (2) the path of God who am omnipresent. By 'human beings' are meant those people who become engaged in their respective duties to which they are qualified according to the results they seek.

'If Your wish to be favourable is the same towards all creatures on account of the absence of the defects of love and aversion in You who are God, and You are there with Your capacity to grant all rewards, why then do not all, becoming desirous of Liberation, take refuge in You alone with the very knowledge that Vāsudeva is everything?'

As to that, hear the reason for this:

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा॥१२॥

12. Longing for the fruition of actions (of their rites and duties), they worship the gods here. For, in the human world, success from action comes quickly.

Kāṅkṣantaḥ, longing for, praying for; *siddhim*, fruition, fructification of the results; *karmaṇām*, of actions; *yajante*, they worship; *iha*, here, in this world; *devatāḥ*, the gods, Indra, Fire and others—which accords with the Upaniṣadic text, 'While he who worships another god thinking, "He is one, and I am another," does not know. He is like an animal to the gods' (Bṛ. 1.4.10). (3) *Hi*, for, in the case of those, indeed, who sacrifice to other gods and long for results; (*siddhiḥ*, success; *karmajā*, from action;) *bhavati*, comes; *kṣipram*, quickly; *mānuṣe-loke*, in the human world, because the authority of the scriptures extends only over the human world.

By the specific statement, 'For, in the human world, success comes quickly,' the Lord shows that results of actions can accrue even in the other worlds. The difference lies in this that, in the human world eligibility for (4) actions is according to castes, stages of life, etc. The fruition of the results of those actions of persons who are eligible according to castes, stages of life, etc. comes quickly.

What is the reason for the rule that the competence for rites and duties according to castes, stages of life, etc. obtains only in the human world, but not in the other worlds?

Or:—It has been said, 'Human beings, having such divisions as castes, stages of life, etc., follow My path in every way.' For what reason, again, do they as a rule follow Your path alone, but not of others?

This is being answered:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम्॥१३॥

13. The four castes have been created by Me through a classification of the *guṇas* and duties. Even though I am the agent of that (act of classification), still know Me to be a non-agent and changeless.

Cātur-varnyam—meaning the same as *catvāraḥ varṇāḥ*, the four castes; *sṛṣṭam*, have been created; *mayā*, by Me who am God, which

accords with such Vedic texts as, 'The Brāhmaṇas were His face ...' (Ṛg. 10.90.12); *guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ*, through a classification of the *guṇas* and duties. (5) By the *guṇas* are meant *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (see note under 2.45; also see Chapter 14).

As to that, the control of the mind and body, austerity, etc. are the duties of the Brāhmaṇas, who are *sāttvika*, that is have a predominance of the quality of *sattva* (purity, goodness, etc.). Courage, valour, etc. are the duties of the Kṣatriyas, in whom *sattva* becomes secondary and *rajas* (passion, attachment, etc.) preponderates. Agriculture etc. are the duties of the Vaiśya, in whom *tamas* (indolence, ignorance, etc.) is secondary and *rajas* is predominant. Service is the only duty of the Śūdra, in whom *rajas* is secondary and *tamas* predominates (see chapters 14, 16,17 and 18). In this way, the four castes have been created by Me through a classification of the *guṇas* and duties. This is the idea. And these four castes do not prevail in the other worlds. Hence the specification, 'in the human world'.

'Well, in that caste, by virtues of Your being the agent of the acts of creation of the four castes, etc., You become subject to the consequence of those actions? Therefore you are not eternally free and the eternal Lord!'

This is being answered: *Api*, even though; I am *kartāram*, the agent; *tasya*, of that act, from the empirical standpoint of *māyā*; still, from the highest standpoint, *viddhi*, know; *mām*, Me; to be *akartāram*, a non-agent; and therefore, also know Me to be *avyayam*, changeless, not subject to the cycle of births and deaths.

'In reality, however, I am not the agent of those actions of which you think I am the agent.' Because—

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते॥१४॥

14. Actions do not taint Me; for Me there is no hankering for the results of actions. One who knows Me thus, does not become bound by actions.

Because of the absence of egoism, those *karmāṇi*, actions; *na limpanti*, do not taint; *mām*, Me, by becoming the originators of body etc. And *me*, for Me; *na spṛhā*, there is no hankering for the results of those actions. But

in the case of transmigrating beings, who have self-identification in the form, 'I am the agent', and thirst for actions as also for their results, it is reasonable that actions should taint them. Owing to the absence of these, actions do not taint Me. Anyone else, too, *yaḥ*, who; *abhijānāti*, knows; *mam*, Me; *iti*, thus, as his own Self, and (knows), 'I am not an agent; I have no hankering for the results of actions'; *saḥ*, he; *na badhyate*, does not become bound; *karmabhiḥ*, by actions. In his case also actions cease to be the originators of body etc. This is the import.

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम्॥१५॥

15. Having known thus, duties were performed even by the ancient seekers of Liberation. Therefore you undertake action itself as was performed earlier by the ancient ones.

Jñātvā, having known; *evam*, thus, that 'I am not an agent; I have no desire for the results of actions'; *karma*, duties; *kṛtam*, were undertaken; *api*, even; *pūrvaiḥ*, by the ancient; *mumukṣubhiḥ*, seekers of Liberation. *Tasmāt*, therefore; *tvam*, you; *kuru*, undertake; *karma*, action; *eva*, itself. You ought not to sit quietly, or even renounce. Therefore, you (undertake actions) because they were performed by the ancients as well—if you have no Self-knowledge, then (undertake actions) for self-purification; or, if you have Self-knowledge, then (undertake actions) in order to prevent people from going astray—, as were *kṛtam*, performed; *pūrvataram*, earlier; *pūrvaiḥ*, by the ancient ones, Janaka and others; not actions as are undertaken in the present day. (6)

'If action has to be undertaken here, then I shall do so following Your instruction itself. What is the use of specifying that it was done earlier by the ancient ones?' 'The answer is: Because there is a great difficulty as regards actions.' How?

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्॥१६॥

16. Even the intelligent are confounded as to what is action and what is inaction. I shall tell you of that action by knowing which you will become

free from evil.

Kavayaḥ api, even the intelligent; *mohitāḥ*, are confounded in this subject of action etc.; *iti atra*, as to; *kim karma*, what is action; and *kim akarma*, what is inaction. Therefore, *pravakṣyāmi*, I shall tell; *te*, you; of *karma*, action; *akarmaca*, as also of inaction; *jñātvā*, by knowing; *yat*, which—action etc.; *mokṣyase*, you will become free: *aśubhāt*, from evil, from transmigration.

'And you should not think thus: What is called *karma* is the movement of the body etc. as are well-known in the world; and *akarma*, inaction, is not doing those, (that is) sitting quietly. What is there to understand (further) in that regard?' 'Why?' The answer is:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥१७॥

17. For there is something to be known even about action, and something to be known about prohibited action; and something has to be known about inaction. The true nature of action is inscrutable.

Hi, for; there is something *boddhavyam*, to be known; *api*, even; *karmaṇaḥ*, about action enjoined by the scriptures; and there is certainly something to be known *vikarmaṇaḥ*, about prohibited action; so also, there is something to be known *akarmaṇaḥ*, about inaction, about sitting quietly. (The words 'there is' are to be supplied in all the three cases.) Because *gatiḥ*, the true nature, that is the essential nature; *karmaṇaḥ*, of action—implying *karma* etc., namely action, prohibited action and inaction; is *gahanā*, inscrutable, hard to understand.

'What, again, is the essential nature of action etc. which has to be understood, and about which it was promised,
"I shall tell you..." (16)?' This is being stated:

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत्॥१८॥

18. He who finds inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is the wise one (7) among men; he is engaged in yoga and is a performer of all

actions!

Since engagement and non-engagement (in action) depend on an agent, therefore, *yaḥ*, he who; *paśyet*, that is *paśyati*, finds; *akarma*, inaction, absence of action; *karmaṇi*, in action—karma means whatever is done, action in general; in that action—; and *yaḥ*, who; finds *karma*, action; *akarmaṇi*, in inaction, in the absence of action; *saḥ*, he; is *buddhimān*, a wise one; *manuṣyeṣu*, among men. All dealings involving an act, accessories, etc. exist certainly on the plane of ignorance, (8) only so long as one has not attained to the Reality. He is a yogī, *yuktaḥ*, engaged in yoga; and a *kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*, performer of all actions. One who discriminates between action and actions. One who discriminates between action and inaction is praised thus.

Objection: Well, what is meant by this contradictory statement, 'He who finds inaction in action', and 'action in inaction'? For action cannot become inaction, nor inaction action. That being so, how can a witness have (such) an incongruous perception?

Vedāntin: Is it not that (9) to an ordinary foolish observer, that which in reality is inaction appears as action, and similarly, action itself as inaction? That being so, in order to show things as they are, the Lord says, 'He who finds inaction in action', etc. Therefore there is no incongruity. Besides, the qualifications such as 'intelligent' etc. (thus) become logical. And by saying, 'there is something to be known', is implied the perception of things as they are. Moreover, freedom from evil cannot follow from an erroneous perception; whereas it has been said, 'by knowing which you will become free from evil'. Therefore, one account of action and inaction being perceived contrarily by the creatures, the Lord's utterance, 'he who finds inaction in action,' etc. is for dispelling their contrary perception.

Not that in the empirical plane inaction has action as its receptacle, like a plum in a bowl! Nor even has action inaction as its receptacle, because inaction is a negation of action. Therefore, action and inaction are actually perceived contrarily by the ordinary persons—like seeing water in a mirage, or silver in nacre.

Objection: Is it not that to everyone action is action itself? Never is there an exception to this.

Vedāntin: That is not so, because when a boat is moving, motionless trees on the bank appear to move in the opposite direction to a man on the boat; an absence of motion is noticed in distant moving things which are not near one's eyes. Similarly, here also occurs the contrary perceptions, namely seeing action in inaction under the idea, 'I am doing', (10) and seeing inaction in action,—because of which it is said, 'He who finds inaction in action,' etc. in order to eliminate them. As such, although this answer has been given more than once, still a man becomes repeatedly deluded under the influence of a totally opposite perception. And forgetting the truth that has been heard again and again, he repeatedly raises false issues and questions! And therefore, observing that the subject is difficult to understand, the Lord gives His answer again and again.

The absence of action in the Self—well-known from the Vedas, Smṛtis and logic, as stated in, '(It is said that) This is unmanifest; This is inconceivable' (2.25), 'Never is this One born, and never does It die' (2.20; Ka. 1.2.18), etc.—has been and will be spoken of. The contrary perception of action in that actionless Self, that is in inaction, is very deep-rooted, owing to which 'even the intelligent are confounded as to what is action and what is inaction.' And as a consequence of the superimposition of action pertaining to the body etc. on the Self, there arise such ideas as, 'I am an agent; this is my action; its result is to be enjoyed by me.' Similarly, with the idea, 'I shall remain quiet, whereby I shall be free from exertion, free from activity, and happy', and superimposing on the Self the cessation of activities pertaining to the body and organs and the resulting happiness, a man imagines, 'I shall not do anything; I shall sit quietly and happily.'

That being so, the Lord says, 'he who finds inaction in action,' etc. with a view to removing this contrary understanding of man. And here in this world, though action belonging to the body and organs continues to be action, still it is superimposed by everyone on the actionless, unchanging Self, as a result of which even a learned person things, 'I act.'

Therefore, *in action* (*karmaṇi*), which is universally considered by all people to be inherent in the Self, like the perception of motion in the

(stationary) trees on the bank of a river—(in that action) he who contrariwise finds the fact of inaction, like perceiving absence of motion in those trees—.

And, *in inaction* (*akarmaṇi*) in the cessation of the activities pertaining to the body and organs and ascribed to the Self in the same way that actions are ascribed—, in that action, *he who sees* action because of egoism being implicit in the idea, ‘I am happily seated quietly, without doing anything’—; he who knows thus the distinction between action and inaction, *is wise*, is learned among men; he is *engaged in yoga*, he is a yogī, and a *performer of all actions*. And he, freed from evil, attains fulfilment. This is the meaning.

This verse is interpreted by some in another way.

How?

(Thus:) ‘Since the daily obligatory duties (*nityakarmas*) certainly have no results when performed as a dedication to God, therefore, in a secondary sense, they are said to be inaction. Again, the non-performance of these (*nitya-karmas*) is inaction; since this produces an evil result, therefore it is called action, verily in a figurative sense. That being so, *he who* sees inaction in the daily obligatory duties (*nitya-karmas*) owing to the absence of their results—in the same way as a cow that does not yield milk is said to be not a cow, though in reality it is so—; so also, in the non-performance of the daily obligatory duties, that is *in inaction*, he who sees action since that yields *results* such as hell etc..’

This explanation is not logical, because freedom from evil as a result of such knowledge is unreasonable, and the utterance of the Lord in the sentence, ‘...by knowing which you will become freed from evil’, will be contradicted.

How?

Even if it be that liberation from evil follows from the *performance* of *nitya-karmas*, it cannot, however, follow from the *knowledge* of the absence of their results. For it has not been enjoined (anywhere) that *knowledge* of the absence of results of *nityakarmas* or the knowledge of the *nityakarmas*

(themselves), leads to the result of freedom from evil. Nor has this been stated here by the Lord Himself.

Hereby is refuted the ‘seeing of action in inaction’, (11) for (according to the opponent) ‘seeing of action in inaction’ has not been enjoined here (12) as a duty, but (what has been enjoined is) merely that performance of the *nityakarmas* is obligatory. Moreover, no result can accrue from the knowledge that evil arises from non-performance of *nityakarmas*. Nor even has non-performance of *nityakarmas* been enjoined as something that should be known. Besides, such results as freedom from evil, wisdom, engagement in yoga, and being a performer of all actions cannot reasonably follow from a false perception of action as inaction. Nor is this a eulogy of false perception. (13) Indeed, false perception is itself an obvious form of evil! How can it bring about liberation from another evil? Surely, darkness does not become the remover of darkness!

Opponent: Well, the seeing of inaction in action, or the seeing of action in inaction—that is not a false perception.

Vedāntin: What then?

Opponent: It is a figurative statement based on the existence or the non-existence of results.

Vedāntin: Not so, because there is no such scriptural statement that something results from knowing action as inaction and inaction as action, even in a figurative sense. Besides, nothing particular is gained by rejecting what is heard of (in the scriptures) and imagining something that is not. Further, it was possible (for the Lord) to express in His own words that there is no result from the *nityakarmas*, and that by their non-performance one would have to go to hell. Under such circumstances, what was the need of the ambiguous statement, ‘He who sees inaction in action,’ etc., which is misleading to others?

This being the case, such an explanation by anyone will be clearly tantamount to imagining that statement of the Lord as meant for deluding people. Moreover, this subject-matter (performance of *nityakarmas*) is not something to be protected with mystifying words. It is not even logical to say that the subject-matter will become easy for comprehension if it is

stated again and again through different words. For, the subject-matter that was stated more clearly in, ‘Your right is for action alone’ (2.47), does not need any repetition. And everywhere it is said that whatever is good and ought to be practised deserves to be understood; anything purposeless does not deserve to be known. Besides, neither is false knowledge worth acquiring nor is the semblance of an object presented by it worth knowing.

Nor even can any evil, which is an entity, arise from the *non-performance* of *nityakarmas*, which is a non-entity, for there is the statement, ‘Of the unreal there is no being’ (2.16), and (in the Upaniṣad) it has been pointed out, ‘How can existence originate from non-existence?’ (Ch. 4.2.2). Since emergence of the existent from the non-existent has been denied, therefore anyone’s assertion that the existent originates from the non-existent will amount to saying that a non-entity becomes an entity, and an entity becomes a non-entity! And that is not rational because it runs counter to all the means of valid knowledge.

Further, the scriptures cannot enjoin fruitless actions, they being naturally painful; and it is illogical that what is painful should be done intentionally. Also, if it is admitted that falling into hell results from their nonperformance (that is of the *nitya-karmas*), then that too is surely a source of evil. In either case, whether one undertakes them or not, the scriptures will be imagined to be useless. And there will be a contradiction with your own standpoint when, after holding that the *nityakarmas* are fruitless, you assert that they lead to Liberation.

Therefore, the meaning of ‘He who finds inaction in action,’ etc. is just what stands out literally. And the verse has been explained by us accordingly.

The aforesaid perception of ‘inaction in action,’ etc. is being praised:

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः॥१९॥

19. The wise call him learned whose actions are all devoid of desires and their thoughts, (14) and whose actions have been burnt away by the fire of wisdom.

Budhāḥ, the wise, the knowers of Brahman; *āhuḥ*, call; *tam*, him; *paṇḍitam*, learned, in the real sense; *yasya*, whose, of the one who perceives as stated above; *samārambhāḥ*, actions—whatever are undertaken; are *sarve*, all; *kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ*, devoid of desires and the thoughts which are their (desires') causes (see 2.62)—that is, (those actions) are performed as mere movements, without any selfish purpose: if they are performed by one (already) engaged in actions, then they are for preventing people from going astray, and if they are done by one who has withdrawn from actions, then they are merely for the maintenance of the body—; and *jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇam*, whose actions have been burnt away by the fire of wisdom.

Finding inaction etc. in action etc. is *jñāna*, wisdom; that itself is *agniḥ*, fire. He whose actions, *karma*, described as good and bad, have been *dagdhāni*, burnt away by that fire of wisdom, is *jñāna-agni-dagdha-karmā*.

However, one who is a perceiver of 'inaction' etc. (15) is free from actions owing to the very fact of his seeing 'inaction' etc. He is a monk, who acts merely for the purpose of maintaining the body. Being so, he does not engage in actions although he might have done so before the dawn of discrimination. He again who, having been engaged in actions under the influence of past tendencies, later on becomes endowed with the fullest Self-knowledge, he surely renounces (all) (16) actions along with their accessories as he does not find any purpose in activity. For some reason, if it becomes impossible to renounce actions and he, for the sake of preventing people from going astray, even remains engaged as before in actions—without attachment to those actions and their results because of the absence of any selfish purpose—, still he surely does nothing at all! His actions verily become 'inaction' because of having been burnt away by the fire of wisdom.

By way of pointing out this idea, the Lord says:

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः॥२०॥

20. Having given up attachment to the results of action, he who is ever-contented, dependent on nothing, he really does not do anything even

though engaged in action.

With the help of the above-mentioned wisdom, *tyaktvā*, having given up the idea of agentship; and *phala-āsaṅgam*, attachment to the results of action; he who is *nitya-tṛptaḥ*, ever-contented, that is, has no hankering for objects; and *nirāśrayaḥ*, dependent on nothing—. *Aśraya* means that on which a person leans, desiring to achieve some human goal. The idea is that he is dependent of any support which may be a means of attaining some coveted seen or unseen result.

In reality, actions done by a man of Knowledge are certainly inactions, since he is endowed with the realization of the actionless Self. Actions together with their accessories must be relinquished by one who has become thus, because they have no end to serve. This being so, *api*, even though; he remains *abhi-pravṛttaḥ*, engaged as before; *karmaṇi*, in actions —getting out of those (actions) being impossible—, either with the intention of preventing people from going astray or with a view to avoiding the censure of the wise people; *saḥ*, he; *eva*, really; *na karoti*, does not do; *kiṅcit*, anything, because he is endued with the realization of the actionless Self. (17)

On the other hand, one who is the opposite of the above-mentioned one, (and) in whom, even before undertaking works, has dawned the realization of his identity with Brahman, the all-pervasive, inmost, actionless Self; who, being bereft of solicitation for desirable objects seen or unseen, has renounced actions along with their accessories, by virtue of seeing no purpose to be served by undertaking actions meant to secure some seen or unseen result, and makes effort only for the maintenance of the body, he, the monk steadfast in Knowledge, becomes free.

Hence, in order to express this idea the Lord says:

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥२१॥

21. One who is without solicitation, who has the mind and organs under control, (and) is totally without possessions, he incurs no sin by performing actions merely for the (maintenance of the) body.

Nirāśīḥ, one who is without solicitation—one from whom *āśiṣaḥ*, (18) solicitations, have departed; *yata-citta-ātmā*, who has the mind and organs under control—one by whom have been controlled (*yatau*) both the internal organ (*citta*) and the external aggregate of body and organs (*ātmā*); (and) is *tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ*, (19) totally without possessions—one by whom have been renounced (*tyaktaḥ*) all (*sarvaḥ*) possessions (*parigrahaḥ*); *na āpnoti*, he does not incur; *kilbiṣam*, sin, in the form of evil as also righteousness—to one aspiring for Liberation, even righteousness is surely an evil because it brings bondage—; (20) *kurvan*, by performing; *karma*, actions; *kevalam*, merely; *śārīram*, for the purpose of maintaining the body—without the idea of agentship even with regard to these (actions).

Further, in the expression, '*kevalam śārīram karma*', do the words *śārīram karma* mean 'actions done by the body' or 'actions merely for the purpose of maintaining the body? Again, what does it matter if by (the words) *śārīram karma* is meant 'actions done by the body' or 'actions merely for the purpose of maintaining the body'?

The answer is: If by *śārīram karma* is meant actions done by the body, then it will amount to a contradiction (21) when the Lord says, 'one does not incur sin by doing *with his body* any action meant for seen or unseen purposes, even though it be prohibited.' Even if the Lord were to say that 'one does not incur sin by doing with his body some scripturally sanctioned action intended to secure a seen or an unseen end', then there arises the contingency of His denying something (some evil) that has not come into being!

(Further,) from the specification, *śārīram karma kurvan* (by doing actions *with the body*), and from the use of the word *kevala* (only), it will amount to saying that one incurs sin by performing actions, called righteous and unrighteous, which can be accomplished with the mind and speech and which come within the purview of injunction and prohibition. Even there, the statement that one incurs sin by performing enjoined actions through the mind and speech will involve a contradiction; even in the case of doing what is prohibited, it will amount to a mere purposeless restatement of a known fact.

On the other hand, when the sense conveyed by *śārīram karma* is taken as actions merely for the purpose of maintaining the body, then the implication will be that he does not do any other work as can be accomplished physically, orally, or mentally, which are known from injunctions and prohibitions (of the scriptures) and which have in view seen or unseen results; while he appears to people to be working with those very body (speech) etc. merely for the purpose of maintaining the body, yet he does not incur sin by merely making movements of the body etc., because from the use of the word *kevala*, (merely) it follows that he is devoid of the sense of agentship implicit in the idea, 'I do.' Since there is no possibility of a person who has reached such a state incurring evil as suggested by the word *sin*, therefore he does not become subject to the evil of transmigration. That is to say, he certainly becomes free without any obstacle since he has all his actions burnt away by the fire of wisdom.

This verse is only a reiteration of the result of full illumination stated earlier. It becomes faultless by accepting the interpretation of *śārīram karma* thus.

In the case of the monk who has renounced *all* possessions, since owning food etc. meant for the bare sustenance of the body is absent, therefore it becomes imperative to beg for alms etc. for the upkeep of the body. Under this circumstance, by way of pointing out the means of obtaining food etc. for the maintenance of the body of a monk as permitted by the text, 'What comes unasked for, without forethought and spontaneously...' (22) (Bo. Sm. 21. 8. 12) etc., the Lord says:

यदृच्छालाभसन्तुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वाऽपि न निबध्यते॥२२॥

22. Remaining satisfied with what comes unasked for, having transcended the dualities, being free from spite, and equipoised under success and failure, he is not bound even by performing actions.

Yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭaḥ, remaining satisfied with what comes unasked for—*yadṛcchā-lābha* means coming to possess something without having prayed for it; feeling contented with that—. *Dvandva-atītaḥ*, having transcended the dualities—one is said to be beyond dualities when his mind

is not distressed even when afflicted by such opposites as heat and cold, etc. —. *Vimatsaraḥ*, being free from spite, from the idea of enmity; and *samaḥ*, equipoised; *siddhau ca asiddhau*, in success and failure, with regard to things that come unasked for—.

The monk who is such, who is equipoised, not delighted or sorrowful in getting or not getting food etc. for the sustenance of the body, who sees inaction etc. in action etc., who is ever poised in the realization of the Self as It is, who, with regard to the activities accomplished by the body etc. in the course of going about for alms etc. for the bare maintenance of the body, is ever clearly conscious of the fact, 'I certainly do not do anything; the organs act on the objects of the organs' (see 5.8; 3.28), he, realizing the absence of agentship in the Self, certainly does not do any actions like going about for alms etc. But when, observing similarly with common human behaviour, agentship is attributed to him by ordinary people, then he (apparently) becomes an agent with regard to such actions as moving about for alms etc. However, from the standpoint of his own realization which has arisen from the valid means of knowledge presented in the scriptures, he is surely not an agent.

He, to whom is thus ascribed agentship by others, *na nibadhyate*, is not bound; *api*, even; *kṛtvā*, by performing such actions as moving about for alms merely for the maintenance of the body, because action which is a source of bondage has been burnt away along with its cause by the fire of wisdom. Thus, this is only a restatement of what has been said earlier.

When a person who has already started works becomes endowed with the realization of the identity of the Self with the actionless Brahman, then it follows that in the case of that man, who has experienced the absence of agentship, actions and purposes in the Self, actions become relinquished. But if this becomes impossible for some reason and he continues to be engaged in those actions as before, still he certainly does not do anything. This absence of action has been shown in the verse, 'Having given up attachment to the results of action...' (20).

Of that very person with regard to whom has been shown the absence of action—

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते॥२३॥

23. Of the liberated person who has got rid of attachment, whose mind is fixed in Knowledge, actions undertaken for a sacrifice get totally destroyed.

Muktasya, of the liberated person who has become relieved of such bondages as righteousness and unrighteousness, etc.; *gatasaṅgasya*, who has got rid of attachment, who has become detached from everything; *jñāna-avasthita-cetasaḥ*, whose mind is fixed in Knowledge only; his *karma*, actions; *ācarataḥ*, undertaken; *yajñāya*, for a sacrifice, to accomplish a sacrifice; (23) *pravilīyate*, gets destroyed; *samagram*, totally—*saha* (together) *agreṇa* (with its consequence, result). This is the meaning.

For what reason, again, does an action that is underway get destroyed totally without producing its result? This is being answered:

Because,

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना॥२४॥

24. The ladle is Brahman, (24) the oblation is Brahman, the offering is poured by Brahman in the fire of Brahman. Brahman alone is to be reached by him who has concentration on Brahman as the objective. (25)

Brahma-arpaṇam, the ladle is Brahman: The knower of Brahman perceives the instrument with which he offers oblation in the fire as Brahman Itself. He perceives it as not existing separately from the Self, as one sees the non-existence of silver in nacre. In this sense it is said that Brahman Itself is the ladle—just as what appears as silver is only nacre. (The two words *brahma* and *arpaṇam* are not parts of a compound word, *samāsa*.) The meaning is that, to a knower of Brahman, what is perceived in the world as ladle is Brahman Itself.

Similarly, *brahma-haviḥ*, the oblation is Brahman: To him, what is seen as oblation is nothing but Brahman.

In the same way, *brahma-agnau*, (—this is a compound word—) in the fire of Brahman: The fire into which oblation is *hutam*, poured; *brahmaṇā*, by Brahman, by the agent, is Brahman Itself. The meaning is that Brahman Itself is the agent (of the offering). That he makes the offering—the act of offering—, that is also Brahman. And the result that is *gantavyam*, to be reached by him; that also is *brahma eva*, surely Brahman.

Brahma-karma-samādhinā, by him who has concentration on Brahman as the objective: Brahman Itself is the objective (*karma*); he who has concentration (*samādhi*) on That is *brahma-karma-samādhiḥ*. The goal to be reached by him is Brahman alone.

Thus, even the action undertaken by one who desires to prevent mankind from going astray is in reality inaction, for it has been sublated by the realization of Brahman. This being so, in the case of the monk from whom action has dropped off, who has renounced all activity, viewing his Knowledge as a (kind of) sacrifice, too, becomes all the more justifiable from the point of view of praising full realization.

That is, whatever is well known as ladle etc. in the context of a sacrifice, all that, in the context of the Self, is Brahman Itself to one who has realized the supreme Truth. If not so, then, since all in Brahman, it would have been useless to specifically mention ladle etc. as Brahman. Therefore, all actions cease to exist for the man of realization who knows that Brahman Itself is all this. And this follows also from the absence (in him) of the idea of accessories. (26) For the act called ‘sacrifice’ is not seen to exist without being in association with the idea of accessories. All such acts as Agnihotra etc. are associated with the ideas of such accessories as making an offering etc. to the particular gods who are revealed in the scriptures, and with the idea of agentship as also desire for results. But they are not found bereft of the ideas of such distinctions as exist among action, accessories and results, or unassociated with the ideas of agentship and hankering for results.

This (apparent) (activity of the man of Knowledge), however, stands dissociated from the ideas of differences among the accessories like ladle etc., actions and results, which get destroyed by the Knowledge of Brahman. Hence, it is inaction to be sure.

And thus has it been shown in, ‘He who finds inaction in action’ (18), ‘he really does not do anything even though engaged in action’ (20), ‘the organs act on the objects of the organs’ (3.28), ‘Remaining absorbed in the Self, the knower of Reality should think, “I certainly do not do anything”’ (5.8), etc. While pointing out thus, the Lord demolishes in various places the ideas of differences among actions, accessories and results. And it is also seen in the case of rites such as Agnihotra undertaken for results (*kāmya*), that the Agnihotra etc. cease to be (*kāmya*) rites undertaken for selfish motives when the desire for their results is destroyed. Similarly, it is seen that actions done intentionally and unintentionally yield different results. So, here as well, in the case of one who has his ideas of distinctions among accessories like ladle etc., actions and results eliminated by the knowledge of Brahman, even activities which are merely external movements amount to inaction. Hence it was said, ‘gets totally destroyed.’

Here some say: That which is Brahman is the ladle etc. It is surely Brahman Itself which exists in the five forms (27) of accessories such as the ladle etc. and it is Itself which undertakes actions. There the ideas of ladle etc. are not eradicated, but the idea of Brahman is attributed to the ladle etc. as one does the ideas of Viṣṇu etc. to images etc., or as one does the idea of Brahman to name etc.

Reply: True, this could have been so as well if the context were not meant for the praise of *jñānayajña* (Knowledge considered as a sacrifice). Here, however, after presenting full realization as expressed by the word *jñāna-yajña*, and the varieties of rites as referred to by the word *yajña* (sacrifice), Knowledge has been praised by the Lord in, ‘*Jñāna-yajña* (Knowledge considered as a sacrifice) is greater than sacrifices requiring materials’ (33). And in the present context, this statement, ‘the ladle is Brahman’ etc., is capable of presenting Knowledge as a sacrifice; otherwise, since Brahman is everything, it will be purposeless to speak specially only of ladle etc. as Brahman. But those who maintain that one has to superimpose the idea of Brahman on the ladle etc., like superimposing the idea of Viṣṇu and others on images etc. and of Brahman on name etc., for them the knowledge of Brahman stated (in the verse) cannot be the intended subject-matter dealt with here, because according to

them ladle etc. are the (primary) objects of knowledge (in the context of the present verse).

Besides, knowledge in the form of superimposition of an idea cannot lead to Liberation as its result; and what is said here is, ‘Brahman alone is to be realized by him’. Also, it is inconsistent to maintain that the result of Liberation can be achieved without full realization. And it goes against the context—the context being of full realization. This is supported by the fact that (the subject of) full realization is introduced in the verse, ‘He who finds inaction in action,’ and at the end (of this chapter) the conclusion pertains to that very subject-matter. The chapter comes to a close by eulogizing full realization itself in, ‘*Jñāna-yajña* (Knowledge considered as a sacrifice) is greater than sacrifices requiring materials’, ‘Achieving Knowledge, one...attains supreme Peace,’ (39) etc. That being so, it is unjustifiable to suddenly say out of context that one has to superimpose the idea of Brahman on the ladle etc. like the superimposition of the idea of Viṣṇu on images. Therefore this verse bears the meaning just as it has been already explained.

As to that, after having presented Knowledge as a sacrifice, other sacrifices also are being mentioned now in the verses beginning with, ‘(Other yogīs undertake) sacrifice to gods alone,’ etc., for eulogizing that Knowledge:

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति॥२५॥

25. Other yogīs undertake sacrifice to gods alone. Others offer the Self, as a sacrifice by the Self itself, in the fire of Brahman.

Apare, other; *yogīnaḥ*, yogīs, ritualists; *pari-upāsate*, undertake; *yajñam*, sacrifice; *daivam*, to gods; *eva*, alone.
A sacrifice by which the gods are adored is *daiva-yajña*; they perform only that. This is the meaning.

Brahma-agnau, in the fire of Brahman: By the word *brahman* is meant That which is referred to in such sentences as, ‘Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Infinite’ (Tai. 2.1), ‘Knowledge, Bliss, Brahman’ (Bṛ. 3.9.28), ‘the Brahman that is immediate and direct—the self that is within

all’ (Bṛ.3.4.1), which is devoid of all worldly characteristics like hunger etc. and which is beyond all particular qualifications—as stated in, ‘Not this, not this’ (Bṛ. 4.4.22). That which is Brahman is the fire. (28) And it is spoken of as Brahmāgni with a view to referring to It as that into which the offering is made.

In that fire of Brahman, *apare*, others, other knowers of Brahman; *upa-juhvati*, offer; *yajñam*, the Self, which is referred to by the word *yajña* (sacrifice), it having been presented as a synonym of the Self;—that Self, which is a sacrifice, which in reality is verily the supreme Brahman, which is associated with such limiting adjuncts as the intellect etc., which is associated with all the qualities of the limiting adjuncts superimposed on it, and which is the oblation, (they offer) *yajñena*, by the Self itself as described above. The offering (of the Self) in that (Brahman) is nothing but the realization of that Self which is associated with the limiting adjuncts to be the supreme Brahman which is free from limiting adjuncts. The monks, steadfast in the realization of the identity of Brahman and the Self, make that offering. This is the meaning.

Beginning with, ‘The ladle is Brahman’ etc., this sacrifice characterized as full realization is being included among such sacrifices as *daiva-yajña* etc. with a view to eulogizing it in the verses beginning with, ‘O destroyer of enemies, *jñāna-yajña* is greater than the sacrifices involving (sacrificial) materials’.

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति।
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति॥२६॥

26. Others offer the organs, namely ear etc., in the fires of self-control. Others offer the objects, namely sound etc., in the fires of the organs.

Anye, others, other yogis; *juhvati*, offer; *indriyāṇi*, the organs; namely *śrotrādīni*, ear etc.; *saṁyama-agniṣu*, in the fires of self-control. The plural (in *fires*) is used because self-control is possible in respect of each of the organs. Self-control itself is the fire. In that they make the offering, that is they practise control of the organs. *Anye*, others; *juhvati*, offer; *viṣayān*, the objects; *śabdādīn*, namely sound etc.; *indriyāgniṣu*, in the fires of the organs. The organs themselves are the fires. They make offerings in those

fires with the organs of hearing etc. They consider the perception of objects not prohibited by the scriptures to be a sacrifice.

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे।
आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते॥२७॥

27. Others offer all the activities of the organs and the activities of the vital force into the fire of the yoga of self-control which has been lighted by Knowledge.

Further, *apare*, others; *juhvati*, offer, that is merge; *sarvāṇi*, all; *indriya-karmāṇi*, the activities of the organs; and also the *prāṇa-karmāṇi*, activities of the vital force—*prāṇa* means the air in the body; they offer its activities such as contraction, expansion, etc; *ātma-saṁyama yoga-agnau*, into the fire of the yoga of self-control—withdrawal (*saṁyama*) (29) into the Self (*ātmā*) is self-control (*ātma-saṁyama*); that itself is the fire of yoga (*yoga-agni*); (they offer) into that fire; *jñāna-dīpite*, which has been lighted by Knowledge, made to blaze up by discriminating knowledge, as if lighted up by oil.

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथाऽपरे।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः॥२८॥

28. Similarly, others are performers of sacrifices through wealth, through austerity, through yoga, and through study and knowledge; others are ascetics with severe vows.

Tathā, similarly; *apare*, others; are *dravya-yajñāḥ*, perfomers of sacrifices through wealth—those sacrificers who spend wealth (*dravya*) in holy places under the idea of performing sacrifices; *tapo-yajñāḥ*, performers of sacrifices through austerity, men of austerity, to whom austerity is a sacrifice; (30) *yoga-yajñāḥ*, performers of sacrifice through yoga—those to whom the yoga consisting in the control of the vital forces, withdrawal of the organs, etc., is a sacrifice; and *svādhyāya-jñāna-yajñāḥ*, performers of sacrifices through study and knowledge.

Sacrificers through study are those to whom the study of Ṛg-veda etc. according to rules is a sacrifice. And sacrificers through knowledge are those to whom proper understanding of the meaning of the scriptures is a

sacrifice. Others are *yatayaḥ*, ascetics, who are diligent; *saṁśita-vratāḥ*, in following severe vows. Those whose vows (*vratāḥ*) have been fully sharpened (*samśita*), made very rigid, are *saṁśita-vratāḥ*. (31)

Further,

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथाऽपरे।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः॥२९॥

29. Constantly practising control of the vital forces by stopping the movements of the outgoing and the incoming breaths, some offer as a sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming breath; while still others, the incoming breath in the outgoing breath.

Prāṇāyāma-parāyaṇāḥ, constantly practising control of the vital forces—that is they practise a form of *prāṇāyāma* called Kumbhaka (stopping the breath either inside or outside) (32)—; *prāṇa-apāna-gatī ruddhvā*, by stopping the movements of the outgoing and the incoming breaths—the outgoing of breath (exhalation) through the mouth and the nostrils is the movement of the Prāṇa; as opposed to that, the movement of Apāna is the going down (of breath) (inhalation); these constitute the *prāṇa-apāna-gatī*, movements of Prāṇa and Apāna; by stopping these; some *juhvati*, offer as a sacrifice; *prāṇam*, the outgoing breath, which is the function of Prāṇa; *apāne*, in the incoming breath, which is the function of Apāna—that is they practise a form of *prāṇāyāma* called Pūraka ('filling in'); while *tathā apare*, still others; offer *apānam*, the incoming breath; *prāṇe*, in the outgoing breath, that is they practise a form of *prāṇāyāma* called Recaka ('emptying out'). (33)

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति।
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः॥३०॥

30. Others, having their food regulated, offer the vital forces in the vital forces. All of them are knowers of the sacrifice and have their sins destroyed by sacrifice.

Besides, *apare*, others; *niyata-āhārāḥ*, having their food regulated; *juhvati*, offer; *prāṇān*, the vital forces, the different kinds of vital forces; *prāṇeṣu*, in the vital forces themselves. Whichever function of the vital

forces is brought under control, in it they offer the other functions. These latter become, as it were, merged in the former. *Sarve api*, all; of *ete*, them; *yajña-vidaḥ*, are knowers of the sacrifice; and *yajña-kṣapita-kalmaṣāḥ*, have their sins destroyed by the sacrifices as mentioned above.

After accomplishing the above-mentioned sacrifices,

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्।
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्य: कुरुसत्तम॥३१॥

31. Those who partake of the nectar left over after a sacrifice, reach the eternal Brahman. This world ceases to exist for one who does not perform sacrifices. What to speak of the other (world), O best among the Kurus (Arjuna)!

Yajña-śiṣṭa-amṛta-bhujaḥ, those who partake of the nectar left over after a sacrifice, that is those who, after performing the sacrifices described above, eat, during the leisure after the sacrifice, the food called nectar, as prescribed by the injunctions; *yānti*, reach; *sanātanam brahma*, the eternal Brahman. For the sake of consistency (with the Upaniṣads) it is understood that if they (the sacrificers) are seekers of Liberation, (then they reach Brahman) in due course of time. (34)

Even *ayam lokaḥ*, this world, common to all beings; *na asti*, ceases to exist; *ayajñasya*, for one who does not perform sacrifices, for him who does not have to his credit even a single one of the above sacrifices. *Kutah anyaḥ*, what to speak of the other world which can be achieved through special disciplines; *kurusattama*, O best among the Kurus!

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे॥३२॥

32. Thus, various kinds of sacrifices lie spread at the mouth of the Vedas. Know them all to be born of action. Knowing thus, you will become liberated.

Evam, thus; *bahu-vidhā yajñāḥ*, various kinds of sacrifices as described; *vitatāḥ*, lie spread; *mukhe*, at the mouth, at the door; *brahmaṇaḥ*, of the Vedas. Those which are known through the Vedas—as

for instance, ‘We offer the vital force into speech’, etc.—are said to be *vitatāḥ*, spread, elaborated; *mukhe*, at the mouth; *brahmaṇaḥ*, of the Vedas.

Viddhi, know; *tān*, them; *sarvān*, all; to be *karmajān*, born of action, accomplished through the activities of body, speech and mind, but not born of the Self. For the Self is actionless. Hence, *jñātvā*, knowing; *evam*, thus; *vimokṣyase*, you will become liberated from evil. By knowing thus —‘These are not my actions; I am actionless and detached’—You will be freed from worldly bondage as a result of this full enlightenment. This is the purport.

Through the verse beginning with, ‘The ladle is Brahman’ etc., complete Illumination has been represented as a sacrifice. And sacrifices of various kinds have been taught. With the help of (35) those (sacrifices) that are meant for accomplishing desirable human ends, Knowledge (considered as a sacrifice) is being extolled:

How?

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते॥३३॥

33. O destroyer of enemies, Knowledge considered as a sacrifice is greater than sacrifices requiring materials. O son of Pṛthā, all actions in their totality culminate in Knowledge.

O destroyer of enemies, *jñāna-yajñaḥ*, Knowledge considered as a sacrifice; is *śreyān*, greater; *dravyamayāt yajñāt*, than sacrifices requiring materials. (36) For, a sacrifice performed with materials is an originator of results, (37) but Knowledge considered as a sacrifice is not productive of results. (38) Hence it is greater, more praiseworthy.

How?

Because, *sarvam*, all; *karma-akhilam*, actions in their totality, without exception; O son of Pṛthā, *parisamāpyate*, culminate, get merged (attain their consummation); *jñāne*, in Knowledge, which is a means to Liberation and is comparable to ‘a flood all around’ (cf.2.46). This is the idea, which accords with the Upaniṣadic text, ‘As when the (face of a die) bearing the number 4, called *Kṛta*, wins, the other inferior (numbers on the die-faces)

get included in it, so whatever good actions are performed by beings, all that gets merged in this one (Raikva). (So it happens) to anyone who knows what he (Raikva) knew' (Ch. 4.1.4).

In that case, by what means is this highly estimable Knowledge acquired? The answer is being given:

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः॥३४॥

34. Know that through prostration, inquiry and service. The wise ones who have realized the Truth will impart the Knowledge to you.

Viddhi, know; *tat*, that, the process by which It is acquired; by approaching teachers *praṇipātena*, through prostration, by lying fully stretched on the ground with face downward, with prolonged salutation; *paripraśnena*, through inquiry, as to how bondage and Liberation come, and what are Knowledge and ignorance; and *sevayā*, through the service of the guru. (Know it) through these and other (disciplines). (39) Being pleased with humility, *jñāninaḥ*, the wise ones, the teachers; *tattva-darśinaḥ*, who have realized the Truth; *upadekṣyanti*, will impart, will tell; *te*, you; *jñānam*, the Knowledge as described above.

Although people may be wise, some of them are apt to know Truth just as it is, while others may not be so. Hence the qualification, 'who have realized the Truth'. The considered view of the Lord is that Knowledge imparted by those who have full enlightenment becomes effective, not any other.

That being so, the next verse also becomes appropriate:

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव।
येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि॥३५॥

35. Knowing which, O Pāṇḍava (Arjuna), you will not come under delusion again in this way, and through which you will see all beings without exception in the Self and also in Me.

Jñātvā, knowing; *yat*, which—by acquiring which Knowledge imparted by them; O Pāṇḍava, *na vāsyasi*, you will not come under; *moham*,

delusion; *punaḥ*, again; *evam*, in this way, in the way you have come under delusion now. Besides, *yena*, through which Knowledge; *drakṣyasi*, you will see directly; *bhūtāni*, all beings; *aśeṣeṇa*, without exception, counting from Brahmā down to a clump of grass; *ātmani*, in the Self, in the innermost Self, thus—'These beings exist in me'; and *atha*, also; see that these are *mayi*, in Me, in Vāsudeva, the supreme Lord. The purport is, 'You will realize the identity of the individual Self and God, which is well known in the Upaniṣads.'

Moreover, the greatness of this Knowledge is:

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि॥३६॥

36. Even if you be the worst sinner among all sinners, still you will cross over all the wickedness with the raft of Knowledge alone.

Api cet asi, even if you be; *pāpa-kṛt-tamaḥ*, the worst sinner, extremely sinful; *sarvebhyaḥ*, among all; *pāpebhyaḥ*, the sinners (*pāpa*, lit. sin, means here sinner) ; still *santariṣyasi*, you will cross over; *sarvam*, all; the *vṛjinam*, wickedness, the ocean of wickedness, sin; (40) *jñāna-plavena eva*, with the raft of Knowledge alone, by using Knowledge alone as a float. Here, (41) righteousness (formal religious observance), too, is said to be an evil in the case of one aspiring for Liberation.

How Knowledge destroys sin is being told with the help of an illustration:

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा॥३७॥

37. O Arjuna, as a blazing fire reduces pieces of wood to ashes, similarly the fire of Knowledge reduces all actions to ashes.

O Arjuna, *yathā*, as; a *samiddhaḥ*, blazing; *agniḥ*, fire, a well lighted fire; *kurute*, reduces; *edhāmsi*, pieces of wood; *bhasmasāt*, to ashes; *tathā*, similarly; *jñānāgniḥ*, the fire of Knowledge—Knowledge itself being the fire; *kurute*, reduces; *bhasmasāt*, to ashes; *sarva-karmāṇi*, all actions, that is it renders them ineffective, for the fire of Knowledge itself cannot

directly (42) burn actions to ashes, like pieces of wood. So, the idea implied is that full enlightenment is the cause of making all actions impotent.

From the force of the context (43) it follows that, since the result of actions owing to which the present body has been born has already become effective, therefore it gets exhausted only through experiencing it. Hence, Knowledge reduces to ashes only all those actions that were done (in this life) prior to the rise of Knowledge and that have not become effective, as also those performed along with (that is after the dawn of) Knowledge, and those that were done in the many past lives.

Since this is so, therefore,

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति॥३८॥

38. Indeed, there is nothing purifying here comparable to Knowledge. One who has become perfected after a (long) time through yoga, realizes That by himself in his own heart.

Hi, indeed; *na vidyate*, there is nothing; *pavitram*, purifying, sanctifying; *iha*, here; *sadṛśam*, comparable; *jñānena*, to Knowledge. *Yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ*, one who has become perfected, who as attained fitness through yoga—the seeker after Liberation who has become *saṁsiddhaḥ*, purified, qualified; *yogena*, through the yoga of Karma and the yoga of concentration—; *kālena*, after a long time; *vindati*, realizes, that is attains; *tat*, That, Knowledge; verily *svayam*, by himself; *ātmani*, in his own heart.

That means by which Knowledge is invariably attained is being taught:

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति॥३९॥

39. The man who has faith, is diligent and has control over the organs, attains Knowledge. Achieving Knowledge, one soon attains supreme Peace.

Śraddhāvān, the man who has faith; *labhate*, attains; *jñānam*, Knowledge. Even when one has faith, he may be indolent. Therefore the Lord says, *tatparaḥ*, who is diligent, steadfast in the service of the teacher, etc., which are the means of attaining Knowledge. Even when one has faith

and is diligent, one may not have control over the organs. Hence the Lord says, *saṁyata-indriyaḥ*, who has control over the organs—he whose organs (*indriyāṇi*) have been withdrawn (*saṁyata*) from objects. He who is such, who is full of faith, diligent, and has control over the organs, does surely attain Knowledge.

However, prostrations etc., which are external, are not invariably fruitful, for there is scope for dissimulation etc. But this is not so in the case of one possessing faith etc. Hence they are the unfailing means of acquiring Knowledge.

What, again, will result from gaining Knowledge? This is being answered: *Labdhvā*, achieving; *jñānam*, Knowledge; *adhigacchati*, one attains; *acirena*, soon indeed; *parām*, supreme; *śāntim*, Peace, supreme detachment called Liberation. That Liberation soon follows from full Knowledge is a fact well ascertained from all the scriptures and reasoning.

One should not entertain any doubt in this matter. For doubt is the most vicious thing. Why? The answer is being stated:

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मन:॥४०॥

40. One who is ignorant and faithless, and has a doubting mind perishes. Neither this world nor the next nor happiness exists for one who has a doubting mind.

Ajñaḥ, one who is ignorant, who has not known the Self; and *aśradda-dhānaḥ*, who is faithless; [44] and *saṁśaya-ātmā*, who has a doubting mind; *vinaśyati*, perishes. Although the ignorant and the faithless get ruined, yet it is not to the extent that a man with a doubting mind does. As for one with a doubting mind, he is the most vicious of them all. How? *Na ayam lokaḥ*, neither this world which is familiar; *na*, nor also; *paraḥ*, the next world; *na sukham*, nor happiness; *asti*, exist; *saṁśaya-ātmanaḥ*, for one who has a doubting mind. For doubt is possible even with regard to them! Therefore one should not entertain doubt.

Why?

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम्।

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय॥४१॥

41. O Dhanañjaya (Arjuna), actions do not bind one who has renounced actions through yoga, whose doubt has been fully dispelled by Knowledge, and who is not inadvertent.

Yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇam, one who has renounced actions through yoga: that person who is a knower of the supreme Goal, by whom actions called righteous or unrighteous have been renounced through the yoga characterized as the Knowledge of the supreme Goal.

How does one become detached from actions through yoga? The Lord says: He is *jñāna-saṁchinna-saṁśayaḥ*, one whose doubts (*saṁśaya*) have been fully dispelled (*saṁchinna*) by Knowledge (*jñāna*) characterized as the realization of the identity of the individual Self and God.

O Dhanañjaya, he who has thus renounced actions through yoga, *ātmavantam*, who is not inadvertent, not careless; him, *karmāṇi*, actions, seen as the activities of the *guṇas* (see 3.28); *na nibadhnanti*, do not bind, (that is) they do not produce a result in the form of evil etc.

Since one whose doubts have been destroyed by Knowledge—arising from the destruction of the impurities (of body, mind, etc.) as a result of the practice of Karma-yoga—does not get bound by actions owing to the mere fact of his actions having been burnt away by Knowledge; and since one who has doubts with regard to the practice of the yogas of Knowledge and actions gets ruined—

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत॥४२॥

42. Therefore, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, take recourse to yoga and rise up, cutting asunder with the sword of Knowledge this doubt of your own in the heart, arising from ignorance.

Tasmāt, therefore, O scion of the Bharata dynasty; *ātiṣṭha*, take recourse to, that is undertake; *yogam*, yoga—performance of actions, which is a means to full Illumination; and now, *uttiṣṭha*, rise up for battle; *chittvā*, cutting asunder; *jñānāsinā*, with the sword of Knowledge—Knowledge is full Illumination, which is a destroyer of such defects as sorrows, delusion,

etc.; that itself is the sword; with that sword of Knowledge—; *enam*, this; *saṁśayam*, doubt; *ātmanaḥ*, of your own, which is a source of one's own ruin and is most sinful; *hṛtstham*, in the heart, residing in the intellect; *ajñāna-sambhūtam*, arising from ignorance, born of non-discrimination.

The word *ātmanaḥ* is used because doubt concerns oneself. Indeed, another's doubt cannot be removed by someone else. Hence the word 'own' is used. So, although the doubt is with regard to the Self, it is really one's own.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *First king* of the Ikṣvāku dynasty, otherwise known as the Solar dynasty.

[2] The paths characterized by Knowledge and by action (rites and duties).

[3] This text points out that the reason for adoring other deities is the ignorance of the Self, which gives rise to the ideas of difference between the worshipped and the worshipper. As animals are beneficial to human beings, so also is the sacrificer to the gods, because through oblations he works for their pleasure!

[4] Aṣṭ. and Ā.Ā. omit 'adhikāra, eligibility for', and read karmāṇi.—Tr.

[5] Ā.G. writes: *guṇa-vibhāgena karma-vibhāgaḥ*, classification of the duties, determined by the classification of the *guṇas*.—Tr

[6] This last portion of the sentence is translated by some as follows: You should not undertake actions which are done in the present manner (that is do not perform actions in the manner undertaken by people nowadays, which neither purifies the mind nor helps people). (See Gī. Pr., p. 114.)

[7] Possessed of the knowledge of Brahman.

[8] Both engagement and non-engagement presuppose agentship and an act of some kind. This, however, holds good on the plane of

ignorance, but not on that of Self-realization.

[9] Aṣṭ. reads *na* in place of *nanu*.—Tr.

[10] Aṣṭ. omits '*aham karomi iti*, under the idea, "I am doing"'.—Tr.

[11] As explained by others.—Tr.

[12] Here, in the present verse.

[13] The stated results accrue from correct knowledge, not from false perception; and correct knowledge alone is praise-worthy.

[14] *Kāma-saṅkalpa* is variously translated as 'desires and purposes', 'plans and desires for results', 'hankering for desires', etc. But Śaṅkarācārya shows *saṅkalpa* as the cause of *kāma*.—Tr.

[15] *Perceiver of inaction etc*.: He who knows the truth about action and inaction as explained before.—Tr.

[16] Aṣṭ. adds this word *sarva*, all.—Tr.

[17] From the subjective standpoint of the enlightened there are no actions, but ordinary people mistakenly think them to be actions, which in reality are a mere semblance of it.

[18] *Āśīḥ* is a kind of desire that can be classed under prayer. (Some translate it as desire, hope.—Tr.)

[19] *Parigraha*: receiving, accepting, possessions, belongings. —V.S.A

[20] Here Aṣṭ. adds *tasmāt tābhyām mukto bhavati samsārāt mukto bhavati ityarthaḥ*, therefore, he becomes free from both of them, that is he becomes liberated from transmigration.—Tr.

[21] Contradiction of the scriptures.

[22] *Unasked for*: what comes before the monk gets ready for going out for alms; *without forethought*: alms that are not given with abuses, and have not fallen on the ground, but collected from five or seven houses without any plan; *spontaneously*: alms brought to one spontaneously by devoted people.

[23] Ā.G. takes *yajña* to mean Viṣṇu. So, *yajñāya* will mean 'for Viṣṇu'. Śaṇkarācārya also interprets this word similarly in 3.9.—Tr.

[24] Some translate as 'Brahman is the ladle...,' etc.—Tr.

[25] As an object to be known and attained. (Some translate *brahma-karma-samādhinā* as, 'by him who sees Brahman in action'.)

[26] See note on p.172.—Tr.

[27] Accessories that can be indicated by the five grammatical case-ending, namely Nominative, Objective, Instrumental, Dative and Locative. (As for instance, the sacrificer, oblation, ladle, sacrificial fire, and Brahman.—Tr.)

[28] Brahman is called fire because, as reflected in wisdom, It burns away everything, that is ignorance, or because everything merges into It during dissolution (*pralaya*).

[29] *Saṁyama* consists of concentration, meditation, and Self-absorption. The idea conveyed by the verse is that by stopping all activities, they concentrate the mind on the Self.

[30] This is according to Ast.—Tr.

[31] Six kinds of sacrifices have been enumerated in this verse.

[32] 'Three sorts of motion of Prāṇāyāma (control of the vital forces) are, one by which we draw the breath in, another by which we throw it out, and the third action is when the breath is held in the lungs or stopped from entering the lungs.'—C.W., Vol.I, 1962, p. 267.

Thus, there are two kinds of Kumbhaka—internal and external.

[33] Constantly practising control of the vital forces, they perform Kumbhaka after Recaka and Pūraka.

[34] The Upaniṣads describe the different stages through which those who do good deeds and practise meditation have to pass before reaching the qualified Brahman after death. For Liberation there is need also of purification of the heart. Thus, they reach Brahman by

stages, and not immediately after death. (See Ch. 8.5 and subsequent portion; also, Bṛ. 4.3.35 to 4.4.25, etc.)

[35] Some translate this as: As compared with...—Tr.

[36] Including study of the Vedas, etc. also.

[37] Worldly prosperity, attaining heaven, etc.

[38] It only reveals the state of Liberation that is an achieved fact. (According to Advaitism, Liberation consists in the removal of ignorance by Illumination. Nothing new is produced thereby.—Tr.)

[39] Other disciplines such as control of the mind, body, etc. Śaṇkarācārya's own words in the Commentary are *evamādinā*, after which Aṣṭ. puts a full stop, and agreeing with this, Ā.G. says that the word *viddhi* (know) is to be connected with *evamādinā*. Hence this translation. Alternatively, those words have to be taken with *praśrayeṇa*. Then the meaning will be, 'Being pleased with such and other forms of humility...'—Tr.

[40] Aṣṭ. reads *pāpa-samudram*, (ocean of sin) in place of *pāpam*.—Tr.

[41] *Here*, in the scriptures imparting spiritual instructions.

[42] Knowledge destroys ignorance, and thereby the idea of agentship is eradicated. This in turn makes actions impossible.

[43]If the body were to die just with the dawn of Knowledge, imparting of Knowledge by enlightened persons would be impossible, and thus there would be no teacher to transmit Knowledge!

[44] Aṣṭ. adds here: *guruvākya-śāstreṣu aviśvāsavān*, who has no faith in the instructions of the teacher and the scriptures.—Tr.

CHAPTER 5

THE WAY TO RENUNCIATION OF ACTIONS

In the instructions beginning with ‘He who finds inaction in action’ (4.18), and in, ‘he is engaged in yoga and is a performer, of all actions (ibid.), ‘whose actions have been burnt away by the fire of wisdom’ (ibid. 19), ‘performing actions merely for the (maintenance of the) body’ (ibid. 21), ‘Remaining satisfied with what comes unasked for’ (ibid. 22), ‘The ladle is Brahman, the oblation is Brahman’ (ibid. 24), ‘Know them all to be born of action’ (ibid. 32), ‘O son of Pṛthā, all actions in their totality culminate in Knowledge’ (ibid. 33), ‘the fire of Knowledge reduces all actions to ashes’ (ibid. 37), ending with ‘actions do not bind one who has renounced actions through yoga’ (ibid. 41), the Lord spoke of renunciation of all actions. And in the words, ‘take recourse to yoga by cutting asunder with the sword of Knowledge this doubt’ (ibid. 42), the Lord has said, ‘You undertake yoga consisting in the performance of actions’.

Between these two, namely the performance of actions and renunciation of actions, since there is mutual opposition as between rest and motion, therefore it is not possible for the same person to undertake them together. Nor has it been enjoined that they should be practised at different times. That is to say, there arises the contingency of having to undertake one of these as a duty. In such a case the one which is more commendable of these two, namely performance of actions and relinquishment of actions, ought to be undertaken, not the other.

Thinking thus and with a view of knowing the one that is more commendable, Arjuna said, ‘O Kṛṣṇa, You speak of renunciation of actions,’ etc.

Objection: Is it not that in the verses quoted above, the Lord, intent on elaborating steadfastness in Knowledge, spoke of renunciation of all actions for a knower of the Self, but not for one ignorant of the Self? And consequently, since performance of actions and their renunciation are meant for different persons, therefore the question with a view to knowing the preference of one over the other does not become logical.

Reply: It is true that from your point of view the question is not rational. We say that, on the other hand, the question is certainly justifiable from the questioner's (Arjuna's) standpoint.

Objection: How?

Reply: In the foregoing passages the emphasis is on the renunciation of actions (not on the agent), because it was intended by the Lord to present that as a duty. But it is impossible to undertake that (renunciation) as a duty unless there is an agent to do so. Therefore, from one point of view, even he who has not realized the Self becomes approved as fit for renunciation. On the other hand, it is not intended that renunciation. On the other hand, it is not intended that renunciation has to be undertaken only by a knower of the Self.

To Arjuna, who thus thinks that even an ignorant person is entitled to both performance of actions and their renunciation, there is mutual contradiction between the two as shown above. And if one of the two has to be undertaken, the more commendable one has to be preferred, not the other. In this way, the question with the intention of knowing the more commendable one is not unjustifiable. From an ascertainment of the meaning of the answer, too, it is understood that the questioner's intention is just this.

Objection: How?

The answer (of the Lord) is: Renunciation and Karma-yoga lead to Liberation. But among these, Karma-yoga excels (cf: 5.2). The point to be ascertained is this: Is it that after stating the purpose of renunciation and Karma-yoga—which are resorted to by a knower of the Self—to be Liberation, it is being hereby (45) said (by the Lord) that between those two themselves, the preeminence of Karma-yoga over renunciation of actions is owing to some speciality, or is it that both those (46) (ideas) are asserted (by Him) with respect to renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga practised by one who is ignorant of the Self?

Objection: What does it matter if the statement means that Liberation can be attained through renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga undertaken by a knower of the Self, and that, of them Karma-yoga is superior to

renunciation of actions; or that both those (ideas) are asserted in respect of renunciation of actions as well as Karma-yoga resorted to by one ignorant of the Self?

Vedāntin: As to this, the answer is: Since it is impossible that renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga can be undertaken by a knower of the Self, therefore, to say that both of them lead to Liberation, and to call his Karma-yoga as superior to renunciation of action—both these positions are absurd. If it were possible for one ignorant of the Self to undertake renunciation of actions and its opposite, Karma-yoga consisting in the performance of actions, then the two statements that both of them lead to Liberation and that Karma-yoga is superior to renunciation of actions become justifiable. But in the case of the knower of the Self, since it is impossible to pursue both renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga, therefore, to say that they lead to Liberation and that Karma-yoga is superior to renunciation of actions is illogical.

With regard to this the *Opponent* says: Is it that renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga are both impossible for a knower of the Self, or that one of the two is impossible? If one of the two be impossible, then, it is renunciation of actions or Karma-yoga? And the reason for this impossibility should also be stated.

As to this, the answer is: In the case of the knower of the Self, since there has occurred a cessation of false knowledge, Karma-yoga, which is based on erroneous knowledge, will become impossible.

What is being established in various places here in the scripture (*Gītā*), in the various portions dealing with the ascertainment of the real nature of the Self, is this: Having stated that for the knower of the Self, who has realized as his own the Self which is actionless owing to Its being free from all such transformations as birth etc. and from whom false ignorance (47) has been eradicated as a result of full enlightenment, there follows renunciation of all actions characterized by abiding in the state of identity with the actionless Self, it is then stated that because of the contradiction between correct knowledge and false ignorance, and their results, Karma-yoga—which is opposed to renunciation of actions which has false ignorance as its basis, which is preceded by the idea of agentship, and which consists in

being established in the active-self—is non-existent for him. This being so, it will be logical to say that Karma-yoga, which has erroneous knowledge for its source, is impossible for the knower of the Self who has become freed from false knowledge.

Objection: In which places, again, dealing with the ascertainment of the true nature of the Self, has been established the absence of actions for the knower of the Self?

The answer to this is: Beginning the topic with, 'But know That to be indestructible' (2.17), the absence of the actions in the case of the knower of the Self has been stated in various places such as, 'He who thinks of this One as the killer' (2.19), 'he who knows this One as indestructible, eternal' (ibid. 21), etc.

Objection: Is it not that in the various places dealing with the ascertainment of the real nature of the Self, Karma-yoga, too, has surely been expounded, as for instance in, 'Therefore, O descendent of Bharata, join the battle' (ibid. 18), 'Even considering your own duty' (ibid. 31), 'Your right is for action alone' (ibid. 47), etc.? And consequently, how can Karma-yoga be impossible for the knower of the Self?

To this the reply is:

Because there is contradiction between right knowledge and false knowledge, and their effects;

because, by the text, 'through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization' (3.3), the steadfastness of the Sāṅkhyas, the men who have known the reality of the Self, in the Yoga of Knowledge characterized as dwelling in the state of identity with the actionless Self, has been distinguished from the steadfastness in Karma-yoga which is resorted to by one ignorant of the Self;

because, from the fact of his having attained fulfilment, there is no need of any other means for the knower of the Self;

and because absence of any other duty has been pointed out in, 'for him there is no duty to perform' (3.17);

also because, in ‘A person does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from action’ (ibid. 4) and ‘But, mighty-armed one, renunciation (of actions) is hard to attain without (Karma-) yoga’ (5.6), Karma-yoga has been prescribed as a means to the knowledge of the Self;

and because, with regard to one in whom has arisen full realization, the absence of Karma-Yoga has been stated in, ‘[For the sage who wishes to ascend (to Dhyāna-yoga), action is said to be the means.] For that person, when he has ascended to (Dhyāna-) yoga, inaction alone is said to be the means’ (6.3);

and because, actions other than those needed for the sustenance of the body have been ruled out in, ‘he incurs no sin by performing actions merely for the (maintenance of the) body’ (4.21);

also because, in the text, ‘the knower of Reality should think, “I certainly do not do anything”’ (5.8), it is taught with regard to one who has known the real nature of the Self that, keeping his mind absorbed in the Self, he should never have the idea ‘I am doing’, even in respect of actions such as seeing, hearing, etc. dictated by the need of merely maintaining the body;

and because, in the case of one who has known the reality of the Self, Karma-yoga which is opposed to full enlightenment and is caused by false knowledge cannot be a possibility even in a dream—therefore (for the above reasons), it is only with regard to the renunciation of actions and with regard to Karma-yoga resorted to by one who is ignorant of the Self that the statement of their dealing to Liberation has been made. And the speciality of (his) Karma-yoga has been spoken of as being easy of performance in comparison with his renunciation of actions which, as distinguished from the renunciation of all actions by the aforesaid knower of the Self, will be partial owing to the persistence of the idea of agentship and will be difficult to be practised along with *yama*, *niyama*, (48) etc.

It stands confirmed that even by interpreting the meaning of the Lord’s answer in this way, the above-mentioned intention of the questioner (Arjuna) becomes well established.

In the verse, 'if it be Your opinion that Wisdom is superior to action' (3.1), when Arjuna, finding that Knowledge and action cannot coexist, asked the Lord, 'Tell me that which is superior of the two,' He stated His conclusion that steadfastness in the Yoga of Knowledge was taught for the knowers of the Self, the monks, while steadfastness in Karma-yoga was for the yogīs.

From the statement that one does not attain fulfilment from mere renunciation (cf. 3.4), it follows that (renunciation) associated with Knowledge is intended as the means to fulfilment. And since Karma-yoga, too, has been enjoined, therefore, with the intention of knowing the distinction between these two to determine whether renunciation devoid of Knowledge is better or Karma-yoga is better, Arjuna asks:

Arjuna said:

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम्॥१॥

1. O Kṛṣṇa, You praise renunciation of actions, and again, (Karma-) yoga. Tell me for certain that one which is better between these two.

(O Kṛṣṇa,) *śaṁsasi*, You praise, that is speak of; *sannyāsam*, renunciation; *karmaṇām*, of actions, of performance of various kinds of rites enjoined by the scriptures; *punaḥ ca*, and again; You praise *yogam*, yoga, the obligatory performance of those very rites! Therefore I have a doubt as to which is better—Is the performance of actions better, or their rejection? And that which is better should be undertaken. And hence, *brūhi*, tell; *mām*, me; *suniścitam*, for certain, as the one intended by You; *tat ekam*, that one—one of the two, since performance of the two together by the same person is impossible; *yat*, which; is *śreyaḥ*, better, more commendable; *etayoḥ*, between these two, between the renunciation of actions and the performance of actions, (49) by undertaking which You think I shall acquire what is beneficial.

While stating His own opinion in order to arrive at a conclusion—

The Blessed Lord said:

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते॥२॥

2. Both renunciation of actions and Karma-yoga lead to Liberation. Between the two, Karma-yoga, however, excels over renunciation of actions.

Ubhau, both, to be sure; *sannyāsaḥ*, renunciation of actions; *ca*, and; *karma-yogaḥ*, Karma-yoga—their performance—; *niḥśreyasa-karau*, lead to Liberation. Though both lead to Liberation by virtue of being the cause of the rise of Knowledge, even then, *tayoḥ*, between the two which are the causes of Liberation; Karma-yoga, *tu*, however; *viśiṣyate*, excels; *karma-sannyāsāt*, over mere renunciation of actions.

Thus He extols Karma-yoga. (50)

Why? In answer the Lord says:

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न कांक्षति।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते॥३॥

3. He who does not hate and does not crave should be known as a man of constant renunciation. For, O mighty-armed one, he who is free from duality becomes easily freed from bondage.

That performer of Karma-yoga, *yaḥ*, who; *na dveṣṭi*, does not hate anything; and *na kānkṣati*, does not crave; *jñeyaḥ*, should be known; as *nitya-sannyāsī*, a man of constant (51) renunciation. The meaning is that he who continues to be like this in the midst of sorrow, happiness and their sources should be known as a man of constant renunciation, even though engaged in actions.

Hi, for; *mahābāho*, O mighty-armed one; *nirdvandvaḥ*, one who is free from duality; *pramucyate*, becomes freed; *sukham*, easily, without trouble; *bandhāt*, from bondage.

It is reasonable that in the case of renunciation and Karma-yoga, which are opposed to each other and can be undertaken by different persons, there should be opposition even between their results; but it cannot be that both

of them surely lead to Liberation. When such a question arises, this is the answer stated:

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बाला: प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिता:।
एकमप्यास्थित: सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम्॥४॥

4. The fools, not the learned ones, speak of Sāṅkhya (the path of Knowledge) and (Karma-) yoga as different. Any one who properly resorts to even one (of them) gets the result of both.

Bālāḥ, the fools; *na paṇḍitāḥ*, not the learned ones; *pravadanti*, speak of; *sāṅkhya-yogau*, Sāṅkhya (52) (the Path of Knowledge) and (Karma-) yoga; as *pṛthak*, different, having opposite and different results. The learned ones, the wise, however, admit one, unconflicting result. How? Any one who *samyak*, properly; *āsthitaḥ*, resorts to, that is follows; *ekam api*, even one, between the Path of Knowledge and (Karma-) yoga; *vindate*, gets; *phalam*, the result; *ubhayoḥ*, of both. For, the result of both is that Liberation itself. Therefore, there is no conflict with regard to the result.

Objection: After beginning the topic with the words, 'renunciation' and '(Karma-) yoga', how is it that the Lord speaks of the identity of the results of the path of Knowledge and (Karma-) yoga, which is beside the point?

Reply: This defect does not arise. Although the question was put by Arjuna merely with regard to renunciation and Karma-yoga, yet the Lord, without actually avoiding them, and by adding something special which was intended by Him, gave the answer by expressing them through other words, 'Sāṅkhya' and '(Karma-) yoga'. Those very 'renunciation and 'Karma-yoga', when they are (respectively) associated with Knowledge and such of Its means as equanimity etc., are meant by the words 'Sāṅkhya' and 'yoga'. This is the Lord's view. Therefore there is no discussion out of the context.

How can the result of both be attained by the proper performance of only one? The answer is:

यत्सांख्यै: प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते।
एकं सांख्यं च योगं च य: पश्यति स पश्यति॥५॥

5. The State (53) that is reached by the Sāṅkhyas, that is reached by the yogīs as well. He sees who sees Sāṅkhya and yoga as one.

Sthānam, the State called Liberation; *yat prāpyate*, that is reached; *sāṅkhyaiḥ*, by the Sāṅkhyas, by the monks steadfast in Knowledge; *tat prāpyate*, that is reached; *yogaiḥ*, by the yogīs; *api*, as well. The yogīs are those who, as a means to the attainment of Knowledge, undertake actions by dedicating them to God without seeking any result for themselves. The purport is that, by them also that State is reached through the process of acquiring monasticism which is a result of the knowledge of the supreme Reality.

Therefore, *saḥ*, he; *paśyati*, sees truly; *yaḥ*, who; *paśyati*, sees; Sāṅkhya and yoga as *ekam*, one, because of the identity of their results. This is the meaning.

Objection: If this be so, then monasticism itself excels yoga! Why, then, is it said, 'Among the two, Karma-yoga, however, excels renunciation of actions'?

Reply: Hear the reason for this: Having in view the mere giving up of actions and Karma-yoga, your question was as to which one was better of the two. My answer was accordingly given that Karma-yoga excels renunciation of actions (resorted to) without Knowledge. But renunciation that is beat on knowledge is Saṅkhya. This is what was meant by me. And that is indeed yoga in the highest sense. However, that which is the Vedic Karma-yoga is figuratively spoken of as yoga and renunciation since it leads to it (supreme Knowledge).

How does it lead to that? The answer is:

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दु:खमाप्तुमयोगत: ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ६ ॥

6. But, O mighty-armed one, renunciation is hard to attain without (Karma-) yoga. The meditative man equipped with yoga attains Brahman without delay.

Tu, but, O mighty-armed one; *sannyāsaḥ*, renunciation, in the real sense; *duḥkham āptum*, is hard to attain; *ayogataḥ*, without (Karma-) yoga.

Muniḥ, the meditative man—the word *muni* being derived in the sense of one who meditates on the real nature of God; *yoga-yuktaḥ*, equipped with yoga, with Vedic Karma-yoga in the form of dedication to God without thought of results (for oneself); *adhigacchati*, attains; *brahma*, Brahman; *na cireṇa*, without delay, very quickly. Therefore it was said by Me, 'Karma-yoga excels'. (54)

The monasticism under discussion is called Brahman because it leads to knowledge of the supreme Self, as stated in the Upaniṣad, 'Nyāsa (monasticism) is Brahman. Brahman is verily the supreme' (Ma. Nā. 21.2) Brahman means monasticism in the real sense, consisting in steadfastness to the knowledge of the supreme Self.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते॥७॥

7. Endowed with yoga, (55) pure in mind, controlled in body, a conqueror of the organs, the Self of the selves of all beings—he does not become tainted even while performing actions. (56)

When again, as a means to attain full enlightenment, this person becomes *yoga-yuktaḥ*, endowed with yoga; *viśuddhātmā*, pure in mind; *vijitātmā*, controlled in body; *jitendriyaḥ*, a conqueror of the organs; and *sarva-bhūtātma-bhūtātmā*, the Self of the selves of all beings—one whose Self (*ātmā*), the inmost consciousness, has become the selves (*ātmā*) of all beings (*sarva-bhūta*) beginning from Brahmā to a clump of grass—, that is, fully illumined; (then,) thus continuing in that state, he *na lipyate*, does not become tainted; *kurvan api*, even while performing actions for preventing mankind from going astray. That is to say, he does not become bound by actions.

And besides, this person does not act in the real sense. Hence,

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित्।

पश्यञ्शृण्वन्स्पृशञ्जिघ्रन्नश्नन्गच्छन्स्वपञ्श्वसन्॥८॥

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन्॥९॥

8–9. Remaining absorbed in the Self, the knower of Reality should think, ‘I certainly do not do anything’, even while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, releasing, holding, opening and closing the eyes—remembering that the organs function in relation to the objects of the organs.

Yuktaḥ, remaining absorbed in the Self; *tattva-vit*, the knower of Reality—knower of the real nature of Truth, of the Self, that is, the seer of the supreme Reality; *manyeta*, should think; ‘*na karomi eva*, I certainly do not do; *kiñcit*, anything.’

Having realized the Truth, when or how should he think? This is being answered; *Api*, even; *paśyan*, while seeing; *śṛṇvan*, hearing; *spṛśan*, touching; *jighran*, smelling; *aśnan*, eating; *gacchan*, moving; *svapan*, sleeping; *śvasan*, breathing; *pralapan*, speaking; *visṛjan*, releasing; *gṛhṇan*, holding; *unmiṣan*, opening; *nimiṣan*, closing the eyes. All these are to be connected with the above *manyeta* (should think).

For the man who has known the Truth thus, who finds nothing but inaction in action—in all the movements of the body and organs—, and who has full realization, there is competence only for giving up all actions because of his realization of the non-existence of actions. Indeed, one who proceeds to drink water in a mirage thinking that water is there, surely does not go there itself for drinking water even after knowing that no water exists there!

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यत्तäवा करोति यः।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा॥१०॥

10. One who acts by dedicating actions to Brahman and by renouncing attachment, he does not become polluted by sin, just as a lotus leaf is not by water.

On the other hand, again, one who is ignorant of the Truth and is engaged in Karma-yoga, *yaḥ*, who; *karoti*, acts; *ādhāya*, by dedicating, by surrendering; all *karmāṇi*, actions; *brahmaṇi*, to Brahman, to God; with the idea, ‘I am working for Him, as a servant does everything for his master’, and *tyaktvā*, by renouncing; *saṅgam*, attachment, even with regard to the resulting Liberation; *saḥ*, he; *na lipyate*, does not get polluted, is not

affected; *pāpena*, by sin; *iva*, just as; *padma-patram*, a lotus leaf; is not *ambhasā*, by water.

The only result that will certainly accrue from such action will be the purification of the heart.

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये॥११॥

11. By giving up attachment, the yogīs undertake work merely through the body, mind, intellect and even the organs, for the purification of themselves.

Since *tyaktvā*, by giving up *saṅgam*, attachment with regard to results; *yoginaḥ*, the yogīs, men of action; *kurvanti*, undertake; *karma*, work; *kevalaiḥ*, merely—this word is to be construed with each of the words, body etc., so as to deny the idea of ownership with regard to *all* actions—; *kāyena*, through the body; *manasā*, through the mind; *buddhyā*, through the intellect; and *api*, even; *indriyaiḥ*, through the organs, which are devoid of the idea of ownership, which are unassociated with ownership thus:
'I act only for God, and not for my gain'; *ātmaśudhaye*, for the purification of themselves, that is, for the purification of the heart, therefore you have competence only for that. So you undertake action alone.

And also since,

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम्।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते॥१२॥

12. Giving up the result of work by becoming resolute in faith, one attains Peace arising from steadfastness. One who is lacking in resolute faith, being attached to the result under the impulsion of desire, becomes bound.

Tyaktvā, giving up; *karma-phalam*, the result of work; *yuktaḥ*, by becoming resolute in faith, by having this conviction thus—'Actions are for God, not for my gain'; *āpnoti*, attains; *śāntim*, Peace, called Liberation; *naiṣṭhikīm* arising from steadfastness. It is to be understood that he attains

this through the stages of purification of the heart, acquisition of Knowledge, renunciation of all actions, and steadfastness in Knowledge.

On the other hand, however, he who is *ayuktaḥ*, lacking in resolute faith; he, *phale saktaḥ*, being attached to result; thinking, 'I am doing this work for my gain'; *kāma-kāreṇa*, under the impulsion of desire—*kāra* is the same as *karaṇa* (action); the action of desire (*kāma-kāra*; under that impulsion of desire, that is being prompted by desire; *nibadhyate*, gets bound. Therefore you become resolute in faith. This is the idea.

But one who has experienced the supreme Reality—

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन्॥१३॥

13. The embodied man of self-control, having given up all actions mentally, continues happily in the town of nine gates, without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all.

Āste, he continues; *sukham*, happily; *sannyasya*, having given up; *sarva-karmāṇi*, all actions—*nitya*, *naimittika*, *kāmya* and *niṣiddha* (prohibited actions); (57) *manasā*, mentally, through discriminating wisdom —that is having given up (all actions) by seeing inaction in action, etc. Freed from the activities of speech, mind and body, effortless, placid in mind, and devoid of all external wants which are different from the Self, he continues happily. This is what has been said.

Where and how does the *vaśī*, man of self-control, that is one who has his organs under control, remain? This is being answered: *Nava-dvāre pure*, in the town with nine gates, of which seven (58) are in the head for one's own experiences, and two are below for urination and defecation. As possessed of those gates, it is called the 'town with nine gates'. Being like a town, the body is called a town with the Self as its only master. And it is inhabited by the organs, mind, intellect and objects, like citizens, as it were, which serve its needs and which are productive of many results and experiences. Renouncing all actions, the *dehī*, embodied one, resides in that town with nine gates.

Objection: What is the need of this specification? For all embodied beings, be they monks or not, reside in bodies to be sure! That being so, the specification is needless.

The answer is: The embodied one, however, who is unenlightened, who perceives merely the aggregate of the body and organs as the Self, he, in his totality, thinks, 'I am in a house, on the ground, or on the seat.' For one who experiences the body alone as the Self, there can certainly be no such conviction as, 'I am in the body, like one's being in a house.' But, for one who realizes the Self as distinct from the aggregate of body etc. it becomes reasonable to have the conviction, 'I am in the body. It is reasonable that as a result of knowledge in the form of discriminating wisdom, there can be a mental renunciation of the actions of others, which have been ignorantly superimposed on the supreme Self. Even in the case of one in whom has arisen discriminating wisdom and who has renounced all actions, there can be, like staying in a house, the continuance in the body itself—the town with nine gates—as a consequence of the persistence of the remnants of the results of past actions which have started bearing fruit, because the awareness of being distinct (from the body) arises while one is in the body itself. From the point of view of the difference between the convictions of the enlightened and the unenlightened persons, the qualifying words, 'He continues in the body itself', do have a purpose to serve.

Although it has been stated that one continues (in the body) by relinquishing actions of the body and organs ignorantly superimposed on the Self, still there may be the apprehension that direct or indirect agentship inheres in the Self. Anticipating this, the Lord says: *na eva kurvan*, without himself doing anything at all; and *na kārayan*, not causing (others) to do, (not) inducing the body and organs to activity.

Objection: Is it that the direct or indirect agentship of the embodied one inheres in the Self and ceases to be after renunciation, as the movement of a traveller ceases with the stoppage of his movement? Or, is it that they do not exist owing to the very nature of the Self?

As to this, the answer is: The Self by Its nature has neither direct nor indirect agentship. For it was stated, 'It is said that…This (Self) is unchangeable' (2.25). 'O son of Kuntī, although existing in the body, It

does not act, nor is It affected’ (13.31). And it is also stated in the Upaniṣad, ‘It seems to meditate, as it were; It seems to move, as it were’ (Bṛ. 4.3.7).

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते॥१४॥

14. The Self does not create agentship or any objects (of desire) for anyone; nor association with the results of actions. But it is Nature that acts.

Prabhuḥ, the Self; *na sṛjati*, does not create; *lokasya*, for anyone; *kartṛtvam*, agentship, by saying ‘Do this’; or even *karmāṇi*, any objects—such objects as chariot, pot, palace, etc. which are intensely longed for; nor even *karma-phala-saṁyogam*, association with the results of actions—association of the creator of a chariot etc. with the result of his work.

Objection: If the embodied one does not do anything himself, and does not make others do, then who is it that engages in work by doing and making others do?

The answer is: *Tu*, but; it is *svabhāvaḥ*, Nature—one’s own (*sva*) nature (*bhāva*)—characterized as ignorance, Māyā, which will be spoken of in, ‘Since this divine Māyā’ (7.14); *pravartate*, that acts.

But from the highest standpoint—

नादत्ते कस्यचित् पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः॥१५॥

15. The Omnipresent neither accepts anybody’s sin nor even virtue. Knowledge remains covered by ignorance. Thereby the creatures become deluded.

Vibhuḥ, the Omnipresent; *na ādatte*, neither accepts; *kasyacit*, anybody’s—even a devotee’s; *pāpam*, sin; *na ca eva*, nor even; does He accept *sukṛtam*, virtue offered by devotees. Why then are such virtuous acts as worship etc. as also sacrifices, charity, oblation, etc. offered by devotees? To this the Lord says: *Jñānam*, knowledge, discriminating wisdom; remains *āvṛtam*, covered; *ajñānena*, by ignorance. *Tena*, thereby; *jantavaḥ*, the

creatures, the non-discriminating people in the world; *muhyanti*, become deluded thus—'I do; I make others do; I eat; I make others eat.'

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम्॥१६॥

16. But in the case of those of whom that ignorance of theirs becomes destroyed by the knowledge (of the Self), their Knowledge, like the sun, reveals that supreme Reality.

Tu, but; *yeṣām*, in the case of those creatures; of whom *tat ajñānam*, that ignorance; *ātmanaḥ*, of theirs—being covered by which ignorance creatures get deluded—; *nāśitam*, becomes destroyed; *jñānena*, by knowledge, by discriminating knowledge concerning the Self; *teṣām*, their; *jñānam*, knowledge; *ādityavat*, like the sun; *prakāśayati*, reveals, in the same way as the sun reveals all forms whatever; *tat-param*, that supreme Reality, the Reality which is the highest Goal, the totality of whatever is to be known.

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः॥१७॥

17. Those who have their intellect absorbed in That, whose Self is That, who are steadfast in That, who have That as their supreme Goal—they attain the state of non-returning, their dirt having been removed by Knowledge.

Tat-buddhayaḥ, those who have their intellect absorbed in That, (59) in the supreme Knowledge which has been revealed; *tat-ātmānaḥ*, whose Self is That, who have That (*tat*) supreme Brahman Itself as their Self (*ātmā*); *tat-niṣṭhāḥ*, who are steadfast in That—*niṣṭhā* is intentness, exclusive devotion; they are called *tat-niṣṭhāḥ* who become steadfast only in Brahman by renouncing all actions; and *tat-parāyaṇāḥ*, who have That as their supreme (*para*) Goal (*ayana*), who have That alone as their supreme Resort, i.e. who are devoted only to the Self; those who have got their ignorance destroyed by Knowledge—those who are of this kind—, they *gacchanti*, attain; *apunarāvṛttim*, the state of non-returning, non-association again with a body; *jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*, their dirt having been

removed, destroyed, by Knowledge. Those whose dirt (*kalmaṣa*), the defect in the form of sin etc., which are the cause of transmigration, have been removed, destroyed (*nirdhūta*), by the aforesaid Knowledge (*jñāna*) are *jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*, that is the monks.

How do those learned ones, whose ignorance regarding the Self has been destroyed by Knowledge, look upon Reality? That is being stated:

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः॥१८॥

18. The learned ones look with equanimity on a Brāhmaṇa endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and even a dog as well as an eater of dog’s meat.

Paṇḍitāḥ, the learned ones; *sama-darśinaḥ*, look with equanimity; *brāhmaṇe*, on a Brāhmaṇa; *vidyā-vinayasampanne*, endowed with learning and humility—*vidyā* means knowledge of the Self, and *vinaya* means pridelessness—, on a Brāhmaṇa who has Self-knowledge and modesty; *gavi*, on a cow; *hastini*, on an elephant; *ca eva*, and even; *śuni*, on a dog; *ca*, as well as; *śvapāke*, on an eater of dog’s meat.

Those learned ones who are habituated to see (equally) the unchanging, same and one Brahman, absolutely untouched by the qualities of *sattva* etc. and the tendencies created by it, as also by the tendencies born of *rajas* and *tamas*, in a Brāhmaṇa, who is endowed with Knowledge and tranquillity, who is possessed of good tendencies and the quality of *sattva*; in a cow, which is possessed of the middling quality of *rajas* and is not spiritually refined; and in an elephant etc., which are wholly and absolutely imbued with the quality of *tamas*—they are seers of equality.

Objection: On the strength of the text, ‘A sacrificer incurs sin by not adoring equally one who is an equal, and by adoring equally one who is an equal to himself’ (Gau. Sm. 17.20), are not they sinful, whose food should not be eaten?

Reply: They are not open to the charge.

Objection: How?

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः॥१९॥

19. Here (60) itself is rebirth conquered by them whose minds are established on sameness. Since Brahman is the same (in all) and free from defects, therefore they are established in Brahman.

Iha eva, here itself, even while they are living; is *sargaḥ*, rebirth; *jitaḥ*, conquered, overcome; *taiḥ*, by them, by the learned ones who see with equanimity; *yeṣām*, whose; *manaḥ*, minds, the internal organs; are *sthitam*, established, made steadfast; *sāmye*, on sameness, in Brahman that exists as the same in all beings. It is *nirdoṣam*, free from defects. Because of Its existence in such mean objects as an eater of dog's meat, etc., though It is supposed by fools to be affected by the defects of those (objects), still It remains untouched by those blemishes, *hi*, because It is free from defects. Nor even is It differentiated by Its qualities, since Consciousness is free from qualifications. And the Lord will speak of desires etc. (cf. 13.6 etc.) as the attributes of the aggregate of body and organs, and will also say, 'Being without beginning and without qualities' (13.31). Nor even are there the ultimate distinctions which can create differentiation in the Self, (61) because there is nothing to prove that these ultimate distinctions exist in every body.

Hence, *samam brahma*, Brahman is the same and one. *Tasmāt*, therefore; *te*, they; *sthitāḥ*, are established; *brahmaṇi*, in Brahman Itself. As a result, not even a shade of defect touches them. For they have no self-identification in the form of perceiving the aggregate of body etc. as the Self.

On the other hand, that statement (Gau. Sm. 17.20) refers to the man who has self-identification in the form of perceiving the aggregate of body, (organs) etc. as the Self, for that statement—'A sacrificer incurs sin by not adoring equally one who is an equal, and by adoring equally one who is not equal to himself', pointedly refers to persons who are the objects of adoration. It is indeed seen that in worship, charity, etc. the determining factors are the possession of such special qualities as being 'a knower of Brahman', 'versed in the six auxiliary branches of Vedic learning', and 'versed in the four Vedas'. But Brahman is bereft of association with all

qualities and defects. This being so, it is logical that they are established in Brahman. And ‘adoring an equal, … an unequal,’ etc. has reference to men of action. (62) But this subject under consideration, beginning from ‘The embodied man … having given up all actions mentally’ (13) to the end of the chapter, is concerning one who has given up all actions.

Since the Self is Brahman which is without blemish and is the same (in all), therefore—

न प्रहृष्येत् प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम्।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः॥२०॥

20. A knower of Brahman, who is established in Brahman, should have his intellect steady and should not be deluded. He should not get delighted by getting what is desirable, nor become dejected by getting what is undesirable.

Brahmavit, a knower of Brahman, as described; *sthitaḥ*, who is established; *brahmaṇi* in Brahman—who is not a performer of actions, i.e. one who has renounced all actions; *sthira-buddhiḥ*, should have his intellect steady—the man of steady intellect is one who has the unwavering, firm conviction of the existence of the one and the same taintless Self in all beings; and further, *asammūḍhaḥ*, he should not be deluded, he should be free from delusion. *Na prahṛṣyet*, he should not get delighted; *prāpya*, by getting; *priyam*, what is desirable; *na ca udvijet*, and surely, neither should he become dejected; *prāpya*, by getting; *apriyam*, what is undesirable—because the acquisition of the desirable and the undesirable are causes of (63) happiness and sorrow for one who considers the body as the Self; not for the one who has realized the absolute Self, since in his case there can be no acquisition of desirable and undesirable objects.

Further, the one who is established in Brahman—

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम्।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते॥२१॥

21. With his heart unattached to external objects, he gets the bliss that is in the Self. With his heart absorbed in meditation on Brahman, he acquires undecaying Bliss.

Asakta-ātmā, with his heart, internal organ, unattached, *bāhya-sparśeṣu*, to external objects—*sparśāḥ* means objects that are contacted, viz. sound etc.; *bāhya-sparśāḥ* means those things which are external (*bāhya*) and are objects of contact; that person who thus has his heart unattached, who derives no happiness from objects; he *vindati*, gets that *sukham*, bliss; *yat*, which is; *ātmani*, in the Self. *Brahma-yoga-yukta-ātmā*, with his heart absorbed in meditation on Brahman—meditation (*yoga*) on Brahman is *brahma-yoga*; one whose internal organ (*ātmā*) is absorbed in (*yukta*), engaged in, that meditation on Brahman is *brahma-yoga-yukta-ātmā*; he *aśnute*, acquires; *akṣayam*, undecaying; *sukham*, Bliss.

So, he who cherishes undecaying happiness in the Self should withdraw the organs from the momentary happiness in external objects. This is the meaning.

For this reason also one should withdraw:

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दु:खयोनय एव ते।
आद्यन्तवन्त: कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुध:॥२२॥

22. Since enjoyments that result from contact (with objects) are verily the sources of sorrow and have a beginning and an end, (therefore) O son of Kuntī, the wise one does not delight in them.

Hi, since; *bhogāḥ*, enjoyments; *ye saṁsparśajāḥ*, that result from contact with objects, that arise from contact between the objects and the organs; are *eva*, verily; *duḥkha-yonayaḥ*, sources of sorrow, because they are creations of ignorance. It is certainly a matter of experience that physical and other sorrows are created by that itself. By the use of the word *eva* (verily), it is understood that, as it happens here in this world, so does it even in the other world. Realizing that there is not the least trace of happiness in the world, one should withdraw the organs from the objects which are comparable to a mirage.

Not only are they sources of sorrow, they also *ādi-antavantaḥ*, have a beginning and an end. *Ādi* (beginning) of enjoyments consists in the contact between objects and senses, and their end (*anta*), indeed, is the loss of that contact. Hence, they have a beginning and an end, they are impermanent, being present in the intervening moment. This is the meaning. (Therefore)

O son of Kuntī, *budhaḥ*, the wise one, the discriminating person who has realized the Reality which is the supreme Goal; *na ramate*, does not delight; *teṣu*, in them, in enjoyments. For delight in objects is seen only in very foolish beings, as for instance in animals etc.

This extremely painful evil, which is opposed to the path of Bliss and is the source of getting all miseries, is difficult to resist. Therefore one must make the utmost effort to avoid it. Hence the Lord says:

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः॥२३॥

23. One who can withstand here itself—before departing from the body—the impulse arising from desire and anger, that man is a yogī; he is happy.

Yaḥ śaknoti, one who can, is able to; *soḍhum*, withstand; *iha eva*, here itself, while alive; *prāk*, before; *śarīra-vimokṣaṇāt*, departing from the body, till death—. Death is put as a limit because the impulse of desire and anger is certainly inevitable for a living person. For this impulse has got infinite sources. One should not relax until his death. This is the idea.

Kāma, desire, is the hankering, thirst, with regard to a coveted object—of an earlier experience, and which is a source of pleasure—when it comes within the range of the senses, or is heard of or remembered. And *krodha*, anger, is that repulsion one has against what are adverse to oneself and are sources of sorrow, when they are seen, heard of or remembered. That impulse (*vega*) which has those desire and anger as its source (*udbhava*) is *kāma-krodha-udbhava-vegaḥ*. The impulse arising from desire is a kind of mental agitation, and has the signs of horripilation, joyful eyes, face, etc. The impulse of anger has the signs of trembling of body, perspiration, biting of lips, red eyes, etc. He who is able to withstand that impulse arising from desire and anger, *saḥ naraḥ*, that man; is *yuktaḥ*, a yogī; and *sukhi*, is happy, in this world.

What kind of a person, being established in Brahman, attains Brahman? The Lord says:

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथाऽन्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति॥२४॥

24. One who is happy within, whose pleasure is within, and who has his light only within, that yogī, having become Brahman, attains absorption in Brahman.

Yaḥ antaḥ-sukhaḥ, one who is happy within, in the indwelling Self; and so also *antar-ārāmaḥ*, has pleasure within—he disports only in the Self within; similarly, *antar-jyotiḥ eva*, has his light only within, has the indwelling Self alone as his light; (64) *saḥ yogī*, that yogī; *yaḥ*, who is of this kind; *brahma-bhūtaḥ*, having become Brahman, even while he is still living; *adhigacchati*, attains; *brahma-nirvāṇam*, absorption in Brahman—gets Liberation.

Besides,

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥२५॥

25. The seers whose sins have been attenuated, who are freed from doubt, whose organs are under control, who are engaged in doing good to all beings, attain absorption in Brahman.

Ṛṣayaḥ, the seers, those who have full realization, the monks; *kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ*, whose sins, defects like sin etc., have been attenuated; *chinna-dvaidhāḥ*, who are freed from doubt; *yata-ātmānaḥ*, whose organs are under control; *ratāḥ*, who are engaged; *sarva-bhūtahite*, in doing good to all beings—favourably disposed towards all, that is harmless; *labhante*, attain; *brahma-nirvāṇam*, absorption in Brahman, Liberation.

Further,

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

26. To the monks who have control over their internal organ, who are free from desire and anger, who have known the Self, there is absorption in Brahman either way.

Yatīnām, to the monks; *yata-cetasām*, who have control over their internal organ; *kāma-krodha-viyuktānām*, who are free from desire and anger; *vidita-ātmanām*, who have known the Self, that is who have full

realization; *vartate*, there is; *brahma-nirvāṇam*, absorption in Brahman, Liberation; *abhitaḥ*, either way, whether living or dead.

Immediate Liberation of the monks who are steadfast in full realization has been stated. And the Lord has said, and will say, at every stage that Karma-yoga, undertaken as a dedication to Brahman, to God, by surrendering all activities (65) to God, leads to Liberation through the stages of purification of the heart, attainment of Knowledge, and renunciation of all actions. Thereafter, now, with the idea,
'I shall speak elaborately of the yoga of meditation which is the proximate discipline for full realization,' the Lord gave instruction through some verses in the form of aphorisms:

स्पर्शान् कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ॥२७॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः॥२८॥

27–28. Keeping the external objects outside, the eyes at the juncture of the eye-brows, and making equal the outgoing and incoming breaths that move through the nostrils, the contemplative who has control over his organs, mind and intellect should be fully intent on Liberation and free from desire, fear and anger. He who is ever thus is verily free.

Kṛtvā, keeping; *bāhyān*, the external; *sparśān*, objects—sound etc.; *bahiḥ*, outside: To one who does not pay attention to the external objects like sound etc., brought to the intellect through the ear etc., the objects become verily kept outside. Having kept them out in this way, and (keeping) the *cakṣuḥ*, eyes; *antare*, at the juncture; *bhruvoḥ*, of the eye-brows (—the word 'keeping' has to be supplied—); and similarly, *samau kṛtvā*, making equal; *prāṇa-apānau*, the outgoing and the incoming breaths; *nāsā-abhyantara-cāriṇau*, that move through the nostrils; *muniḥ*, the contemplative—derived (from the root *man*) in the sense of contemplating—, the monk; *yata-indriya-mano-buddhiḥ*, who has control over his organs, mind and intellect; should be *mokṣa-parāyaṇaḥ*, fully intent on Liberation—keeping his body is such a posture, the contemplative should have Liberation itself as the supreme Goal. He should be *vigata-*

icchā-bhaya-krodhaḥ*, free from desire, fear and anger. The monk *yaḥ*, who; *sadā*, ever remains thus; *saḥ*, he; is *muktaḥ yah*, who; *sadā*, ever remains thus; *saḥ*, he; is *muktaḥ eva*, verily free. He has no other Liberation to seek after.

What is there to be realized by one who has his mind thus concentrated? The answer to this is being stated:

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति॥२९॥

29. One attains Peace by knowing Me who, as the great Lord of all the worlds, am the enjoyer of sacrifices and austerities, (and) who am the friend of all creatures.

Ṛcchati, one attains; *śāntim*, Peace, complete cessation of transmigration; *jñātvā*, by knowing; *mām*, Me who am Nārāyaṇa; who, as the *sarva-loka-maheśvaram*, great Lord of all the worlds; am the *bhoktāram*, enjoyer (of the fruits); *yajña-tapasām*, of sacrifices and austerities, as the performer and the Deity of the sacrifices and austerities (respectively); (and) who am the *suhṛdam*, friend; *sarva-bhūtānām*, of all creatures—who am the Benefactor of all without consideration of return, who exist in the heart of all beings, who am the dispenser of the results of all works, who am the Witness of all perceptions.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[45] In verse (cf: 5.2).—Tr.

[46] *Both those* (ideas)—that Karma-yoga, too leads to Liberation, and also that it is superior to renunciation of actions.—Tr.

[47] The compound *mithyājñāna* is to be split as *mithyā ajñāna*: that which is false and is ignorance.

[48] *Yama*: non-cruelty, forgiveness, truthfulness, harmlessness, control of the body and organs, straightforwardness, love, serenity, sweetness and absence of anger; *Niyama*: charity, sacrifice,

austerity, meditation, study, celibacy, vows, fasting, silence and bathing.

[49] Aṣṭ. reads *karma-yoga-anuṣṭhānā* (performance of Karma-yoga) in place of *karma-anuṣṭhāna* (performance of actions).—Tr.

[50] Karma-yoga is better than renunciation of actions that is not based on Knowledge.

[51] *A man of constant renunciation*: He is a man of renunciation even before the realization of the actionless Self.

[52] Sāṅkhya, that is monasticism, is that which is suited for *saṅkhyā*, Self-inquiry.

[53] *Sthāna* (State) is used in the derivative sense of 'the place in which one remains established, and from which one does not become relegated'.

[54] Karma-yoga leads to enlightenment through the stages of attenuation of attachment, withdrawal of the internal and external organs from their objects, and their inclination towards the indwelling Self. (Also see Commentary on 5.12).

[55] i.e. devoted to the performance of the *nitya* and *naimittika* duties.

[56] The construction of the sentence is this: When this person resorts to *nitya* and *naimittika* rites and duties as a means to the achievement of full Illumination, and thus becomes fully enlightened, then, even when he acts through the apparent functions of the mind, organs, etc., he does not become affected.

[57] See note on p. 125.—Tr.

[58] Two ears, two eyes, nostrils, and mouth.

[59] Here Aṣṭ. reads '*tasmin brahmaṇi*, in that Brahman'.—Tr.

[60] i.e. even while living in the body.

[61] According to the Vaiśeṣikas, everything is possessed of not only qualities but also of *antya-viśeṣa* (ultimate distinction), which is a category like substance, quality, action, etc. This distinction makes

every entity different from other entities. Thus, individual souls have their own ultimate distinctions by the very fact that they are individuals.

Vedānta denies such a category. Besides, the Self is one and omnipresent. Therefore there is nothing else from which It can be distinguished.—Tr.

[62] Those engaged in actions with a sense of agentship, etc.—Tr.

[63] Aṣṭ.'s reading is '*harṣa-viṣādau kurvāte*, cause happiness and sorrow' in place of '*harṣa-viṣāda-sthāne*, sources of happiness and sorrow', which (latter) reading occurs in Gī. Pr. and A.A.—Tr.

[64] He has not to depend on the organs like ear etc. for acquiring knowledge.

[65] The activities of body, mind and organs.

CHAPTER 6

THE YOGA OF MEDITATION

The verses, ‘Keeping the external objects outside’ etc., forming aphorisms on the Yoga of Meditation which is the proximate discipline leading to complete Illumination, have been presented at the end of the just preceding chapter. This sixth chapter is begun as an exposition of them. As to that, since rites and duties (that is actions) are the preliminary disciplines of the Yoga of Meditation (Dhyāna-yoga), therefore actions have to be undertaken by a householder who is qualified for them, so long as he is unable to ascend to the Yoga of Meditation. Hence, the Lord eulogizes it.

Objection: Well, since obligatory duties have surely to be performed so long as one lives, why should ascending to Dhyāna-yoga be prescribed as a limit?

Reply: Not so, because it has been specifically stated, ‘For the sage who wishes to ascend to (Dhyāna-)yoga, action is said to be the means’, and because inaction alone has been prescribed as suitable for that person when he has ascended. If the intention was that inaction and action were both duties for the man desiring to ascend and to the one who has ascended, then the specification and differentiation between one trying to ascend and one who has ascended, from the point of view of the difference between the scopes of inaction and action, becomes meaningless.

Objection: In the empirical world, among people belonging to the different stages of life, some one becomes an aspirant for ascending to (Dhyāna-) yoga, and some one has ascended to it, whereas others are neither trying to ascend nor have they ascended. May it not be said that with regard to them (the third), it is certainly logical to specify and differentiate by saying ‘for one wanting to ascend’ and ‘for one who has ascended’?

Reply: No, because of the statement, ‘for that person … alone’; and the use of the word ‘(Dhyāna-) yoga’ over again in, ‘when he has ascended to (Dhyāna-) yoga’, amounts to asserting that, in the case of that very person who was earlier trying to ascend to Yoga, inaction itself becomes a duty as a

means to the fruition of Yoga when he was already ascended to it. Hence, no work whatsoever becomes a duty to be followed throughout life.

This follows also from the statement about one who has fallen from Yoga. (66) If it be that in the sixth chapter (Dhyāna-) yoga has been ordained for a householder who is engaged in rites and duties, then, even though he were to fall from (Dhyāna-) yoga, he would still get the goal of actions, that is the results of rites and duties. This being so, the apprehension of his ruin (see 37–9) will be illogical. Since Liberation, by virtue of being eternal, is not an effect, therefore, a duty when performed, be it motivated (*kāmya*) or obligatory (*nitya*), will certainly produce its own result (67) (other than Liberation). And we have said that, since the *nityakarmas* (as also the *naimittika-karmas*) are known as the authority of the Vedas, therefore they must have some result. For, otherwise, there arises the contingency of the Vedas becoming purposeless. And hence, so long as rites and duties persist, the statement about 'falling from both' does not become meaningful, for, logically there is no cause for the destruction of (the results of) rites and duties.

Objection: May it not be said that, since actions are performed by dedicating them to God, therefore the results of actions do not accrue to their agent?

Reply: No, because it is reasonable that dedication to God should bring in greater results (to the agent).

Objection: May it not be said that they are meant only for Liberation? When dedication of one's own accomplished duties to God is conjoined with (Dhyāna-) yoga, it results only in Liberation, not in anything else. And since he has become deflected from (Dhyāna-) yoga, therefore in his case it is certainly reasonable to apprehend ruin.

Reply: No, because renunciation of actions has been enjoined in, 'alone, with body and mind controlled, free from expectations (and) free from acquisition,' (10) and 'firm in the vow of a celibate' (14). Moreover, in this context it cannot be imagined that during meditation there is need for help from one's wife—to deny which solitude has been enjoined. (68) And the sentence, 'free from expectations, free from acquisition' (10), etc. is not

applicable in the case of a householder; besides, the question of ‘falling from both’ becomes illogical.

Objection: Can it not be held that by the text, ‘without depending on the results of action,’ etc., renunciation and meditation are enjoined only for the men of action, and renunciation and meditation have been prohibited for one who does not keep a fire and does not perform rites and duties?

Reply: No, because that (verse) is meant as a eulogy of renunciation of hankering for the results of actions, which is a remote aid to Dhyāna-yoga: The one who simply does not keep a fire and is actionless is not a monk and a man of meditation. What then? Even a man of action who, for the sake of purification of the mind, performs the yoga of Karma by renouncing attachment to the results of actions may be considered a monk and a man of meditation. The man of action is thus eulogized.

Besides, it is not logical that one and the same sentence should mean an eulogy of renunciation of hankering for the results of actions and also a prohibition of the fourth stage of life (monasticism). Moreover, the Lord is not prohibiting the well-known renunciation and meditation enjoined by the Vedas, Smṛtis, Purāṇas, Itihāsas and the scriptures on Yoga for a monk who does not keep a fire, who is actionless, and a man of renunciation in the real sense. For that would contradict His own utterances as well. And the Lord has pointed out His own ideas in various places such as, ‘(The embodied man) having given up all actions mentally, continues (happily) … without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all’ (5.13); ‘who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded’ (12.19); ‘That man … who after rejecting all desires, moves about’ (2.71); ‘he who has renounced every undertaking’ (12.16). The prohibition of the fourth stage of life will run counter to these (verses).

Therefore, in the case of the sage who wants to attain to Dhyāna-yoga but has already entered the householder’s life, Agnihotra sacrifices etc., when performed without desire for their results, become a means to ascend to Dhyāna-yoga through the purification of the heart. Accordingly, he is praised by saying that ‘he is a monk and a man of meditation.’

The Blessed Lord said:

अनाश्रित: कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति य:।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रिय:॥१॥

1. He who performs an action which is his duty, without depending on the result of action, he is a monk and a yogī; (but) not (so is) he who does not keep a fire and is actionless.

Anāśritaḥ, without depending on;—on what?—on that which is *karma-phalam*, the result of action—that is without craving for the result of action—. He who craves for the results of actions becomes dependent on the results of actions. But this person is the opposite of such a one. Hence (it is said), 'without depending on the result of action'.

Having become so, *yaḥ* he who; *karoti*, performs, accomplishes; (*karma*, an action;) which is his *kāryam*, duty, the *nityakarmas* such as Agnihotra etc. which are opposed to the *kāmya-karmas*—.

Whoever is a man of action of this kind is distinguished from the other men of action. In order to express this idea the Lord says, *saḥ*, he; is a *sannyāsī*, monk, and a *yogī*. Sannyāsa, means renunciation. He who is possessed of this is a *sannyāsī*, a monk. And he is also a *yogī*. Yoga means concentration of mind. He who has that is a *yogī*. It is to be understood that this man is possessed of these qualities. It is not to be understood that, only that person who does not keep a fire (*niragniḥ*) and who is actionless (*akriyaḥ*) is a monk and a *yogī*. *Niragniḥ* is one from whom the fires, (69) which are the accessories of rites, have become dissociated. By *kriyā* are meant austerity, charity, etc. which are performed without fire. *Akriyaḥ*, actionless, is he who does not have even such *kriyās*.

Objection: Is it not only with regard to one who does not keep a fire and is actionless that monasticism and meditativeness are well known in the Vedas, Smṛtis and scriptures dealing with meditation? Why are monasticism and meditativeness spoken of here with regard to one who keeps a fire and is a man of action—which is not accepted as a fact?

Reply: This defect does not arise, because both are sought to be asserted in some secondary sense.

Objection: How is that?

Reply: His being *a monk* is by virtue of his having given up hankering for the results of actions; and his being *a man of meditation* is from the fact of his doing actions as accessories to meditation or from his rejection of thoughts for the results of actions which cause disturbances in the mind. Thus both are used in a figurative sense. On the contrary, it is not that monasticism and meditativeness are meant in the primary sense. With a view to pointing out this idea, the Lord says:

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन॥२॥

2. That which they call monasticism, know that to be Yoga, O Pāṇḍava. For, nobody who has not given up expectations can be a yogī.

Yam, that which is characterized by the giving up of all actions and their results; which *prāhuḥ*, they, the knowers of the Vedas and the Smṛtis, call; *sannyāsam iti*, monasticism, in the real sense; *viddhi*, known; *tam*, that monasticism in the real sense; to be *yogam*, Yoga, consisting in the performance of actions, O Pāṇḍava.

Accepting what kind of similarity between Karma-yoga, which is characterized by engagement (in actions), and its opposite, renunciation in the real sense, which is characterized by cessation from work, has their equation been stated?

When such an apprehension arises, the answer is this; From the point of view of the agent, there does exist a similarity of Karma-yoga with real renunciation. For he who is a monk in the real sense, from the very fact of his having given up all the means needed for accomplishing actions, gives up the thought of all actions and their results—the source of desire that leads to engagement in work. (70) This Karma-yogī also, even while performing actions, gives up the thought for results.

Pointing out this idea, the Lord says: *Hi*, for; *kaścit*, nobody, no man of action whosoever; *a sannyasta-saṅkalpaḥ*, who has not given up expectations—one by whom has not been renounced expectation, anticipation, of results; *bhavati*, becomes, that is can become; *yogī*, a yogī, a man of concentration, because thought of results is the cause of the disturbance of mind. Therefore, any man of action who gives up the thought

of results would become a yogī, a man of concentration with an unperturbed mind, because of his having given up thought of results which is the cause of mental distractions. This is the purport.

Thus, because of the similarity of real monasticism with Karma-yoga from the point of view of giving up by the agent, Karma-yoga is extolled as monasticism in, ‘That which they call monasticism, know that to be Yoga, O Pāṇḍava.’

Since Karma-yoga, which is independent of results, is the remote help to Dhyāna-yoga, therefore it has been praised as monasticism. Thereafter, now the Lord shows how Karma-yoga is helpful to Dhyāna-yoga:

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते॥३॥

3. For the sage who wishes to ascend to (Dhyāna-)yoga, action is said to be the means. For that person, when he has ascended to (Dhyāna-)yoga, inaction alone is said to be the means.

Ārurukṣoḥ, for one who wishes to ascend, who has not ascended, that is for that very person who is unable to remain established in Dhyāna-yoga;—for which person who is desirous to ascend?—*muneḥ*, for the sage, that is for one who has renounced the results of actions;—trying to ascend to what?—*yogam*, to (Dhyāna-) yoga; *karma*, action; *ucyate*, is said to be; the *kāraṇam*, means. *Tasya*, for that person, again; *yoga-ārūḍhasya*, when he has ascended to (Dhyāna-) yoga; *śamaḥ*, inaction, withdrawal from all actions; *eva*, alone; *ucyate*, is said to be; *kāraṇam*, the means for remaining poised in the state of meditation. This is the meaning.

To the extent that one withdraws from actions, the mind of that man who is at ease and self-controlled becomes concentrated. When this occurs, he at once becomes established in Yoga. And accordingly has it been said by Vyāsa: ‘For a Brāhmaṇa there is no wealth comparable to (the knowledge of) oneness, sameness, truthfulness, character, equipoise, harmlessness, straightforwardness and withdrawal from various actions’ (Mbh. Śā. 175.37).

After that, now is being stated when one becomes established in Yoga:

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते॥४॥

Verily, (71) when a man who has given up thought about everything does not get attached to sense-objects or actions, he is then said to be established in Yoga.

Hi, verily; *yadā*, when; a yogī who is concentrating his mind, *sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsī*, who has given up thought about everything—who is apt to give up (*sannyāsa*) all (*sarva*) thoughts (*saṅkalpa*) which are the causes of desire, for things here and hereafter; *na anuṣajjate*, does not become attached, that is does not hold the idea that they have to be done by him; *indriya-artheṣu*, with regard to sense-objects like sound etc.; and *karmasu*, with regard to actions—*nitya*, *naimittika*, *kāmya* and *niṣiddha* (prohibited)—because of the absence of the idea of their utility; *tadā*, then, at that time; *ucyate*, he is said to be; *yoga-ārūḍhaḥ*, established in Yoga, that is he is said to have attained to Yoga.

From the expression, 'one who has given up thought about everything', it follows that one has to renounce all desires and all actions, for all desires have thoughts as their source. This accords with such Smṛti texts as:

'Verily, desire has thought as its source. Sacrifices arise from thoughts' (Ma. Sm. 2.3);

'O Desire, I know your source. You surely spring from thought. I shall not think of you. So you will not arise in me' (Mbh. Śā. 177.25).

And when one gives up all desires, renunciation of all actions becomes accomplished. This agrees with such Upaniṣadic texts as, '(This self is identified with desire alone.) What it desires, it resolves; what it resolves, it works out' (Bṛ. 4.4.5); and also such Smṛti texts as, 'Whatever actions a man does, all that is the effect of desire itself' (Ma. Sm. 2.4). It accords with reason also. For, when all thoughts are renounced, no one can even move a little. So, by the expression, 'one who has given up thought about everything', the Lord makes one renounce all desires and all actions.

When one is thus established in Yoga, then by that very fact one's self becomes uplifted by oneself from the worldly state which is replete with

evils. Hence,

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः॥५॥

5. One should save oneself by oneself; one should not lower oneself. For oneself is verily one's own friend; oneself is verily one's own enemy.

Uddharet, one should save; *ātmānam*, oneself sunk in the sea of the world; *ātmanā*, by oneself; one should save, *ut-haret*, should uplift (oneself) from that, that is make it attain the state of being established in Yoga. *Na avasādayet*, one should not lower, debase; *ātmānam*, oneself. *Hi*, for; *ātmā eva*, oneself is verily; *ātmanaḥ* one's own; *bandhuḥ*, friend. Certainly there is no other friend who can bring about liberation from this world. In fact, even a friend is an obstacle to Liberation, he being the source of such bondages as love etc. Therefore the emphatic statement, 'For one is one's own friend', is justifiable.

Ātmā eva, oneself verily; is *ātmanaḥ*, one's own; *ripuḥ*, enemy. Anyone else who is an external harmful enemy, even he is of one's own making! Therefore the firm conclusion, 'oneself verily is one's own enemy' is reasonable.

It has been said that 'oneself is verily one's own friend, oneself verily is one's own enemy.' As to that, (the self) (72) of what kind is one's own friend, or (the self) of what kind is one's own enemy? This is being answered:

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत्॥६॥

6. Of him, by whom has been conquered his very self by the self, his self is the friend of his self. But, for one who has not conquered his self, his self itself acts inimically like an enemy.

Tasya, of him; *yena*, by whom; *jitaḥ*, has been conquered, subdued; his *eva ātmā*, very self, the aggregate of body and organs; that *ātmā*, self; is *bandhuḥ*, the friend; *ātmanaḥ*, of his self. The idea is that he is a conqueror of his senses. *Tu*, but; *anātmanaḥ*, for one who has not conquered his self,

who has no self-control; *ātmā eva*, his self itself; *varteta*, acts; *śatruvat*, like an enemy; *śatrutve*, inimically, with the attitude of an enemy. As an enemy, who is different from oneself, does harm to oneself, similarly one's self behaves like an enemy to oneself. This is the meaning. (73)

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः॥७॥

7. The supreme Self of one who has control over the aggregate of his body and organs, and who is tranquil, becomes manifest. (He should be equipoised) (74) in the midst of cold and heat, happiness and sorrow, as also honour and dishonour.

Parama-ātmā, the supreme Self; *jita-ātmanaḥ*, of one who has control over the aggregate of his body and organs; *praśāntasya*, who is tranquil, who is a monk with his internal organ placid; *samāhitaḥ*, becomes manifest, that is becomes directly manifest as his own Self. Moreover, (he should be equipoised) *śīta-uṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu*, in the midst of cold and heat, happiness and sorrow; *tathā*, as also; *māna-apamānayoḥ* in honour and dishonour, adoration and despise.

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः॥८॥

8. One whose mind is satisfied with knowledge and realization, who is unmoved, who has his organs under control, is said to be Self-absorbed. The yogī treats equally a lump of earth, a stone and gold.

A yogī, *jñāna-vijñāna-tṛpta-ātmā*, whose mind is satisfied with knowledge and realization—*jñāna* is thorough knowledge of things presented by the scriptures, but *vijñāna* is making those things known from the scriptures a subject of one's own realization just as they have been presented; he whose mind (*ātmā*) has become contented (*tṛpta*) with those *jñāna* and *vijñāna* is *jñāna-vijñāna-tṛpta-ātmā*—; *kūṭasthaḥ*, who is unmoved, that is who becomes unshakable; and *vijita-indriyaḥ*, who has his organs under control;—he who is of this kind, *ucyate*, is said to be; *yuktaḥ*, Self-absorbed. That yogī *sama-loṣṭa-aśma-kāñcanaḥ*, treats equally a lump of earth, a stone and gold.

Further,

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते॥९॥

9. He excels who has sameness of view with regard to a benefactor, a friend, a foe, (75) a neutral, an arbiter, the hateful, (76) a relative, good people and even sinners.

The first line of the verse beginning with 'benefactor,' etc. is a single compound word.

Viśiṣyate, he excels, that is, he is the best among all those who are established in Yoga—(a different reading is *vimucyate*, he becomes free); *sama-buddhiḥ*, who has sameness of view, that is whose mind is not engaged with the question of who one is and what he does; with regard to a *suhṛd*, benefactor—one who does some good without consideration of return; *mitram*, a friend, one who is affectionate; *ariḥ*, a foe; *udāsīnaḥ*, a neutral, who sides with nobody; *madhyasthaḥ*, an arbiter, who is a well-wisher of two conflicting parties; *dveṣyaḥ*, the hateful, who is repulsive to oneself; *bandhuḥ*, a relative;—to all these as also *sādhuṣu*, with regard to good people, who follow the scriptures; *api ca*, and even; *pāpeṣu*, sinners, who perform prohibited actions—with regard to all of them.

Therefore, to acquire this excellent result—

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः॥१०॥

10. A yogī should constantly concentrate his mind by staying in a solitary place, alone, with mind and body controlled, free from expectations, (and) free from acquisition.

A *yogī*, a man of meditation; *satatam yuñjīta*, should constantly concentrate; *ātmānam*, his mind; *sthitaḥ*, by staying; *rahasi*, in a solitary place, in mountain caves etc.; *ekākī*, alone, without any companion; *yata-citta-ātmā*, with mind and body controlled; *nirāśīḥ*, without expectations, free from hankering; and *aparigrahaḥ*, free from acquisition.

From the use of the qualifying words, ‘in a solitary place’ and ‘alone’, it follows that (he has to undertake all these) after espousing monasticism. And even after renunciation, he should concentrate his mind by desisting from all acquisition. This is the meaning.

Now then have to be stated the rules regarding seat, food, movements, etc. as disciplines for yoga in the case of one practising concentration; as also the signs of one who has succeeded in Yoga, and the consequent result etc. Hence this is begun. Among these, the *seat* is being first spoken of:

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मन:।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम्॥११॥

तत्रैकाग्रं मन: कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रिय:।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये॥१२॥

11. Having firmly established in a clean place his seat, neither too high nor too low, and made of cloth, skin and *kuśa*-grass, placed successively one below the other;

12. (and) sitting on that seat, he should concentrate his mind for the purification of the internal organ, making the mind one-pointed and keeping the actions of the mind and senses under control.

Pratiṣṭhāpya, having established; *sthiram*, firmly; *śucau*, in a clean; *deśe*, place, which is solitary, either naturally or through improvement; *ātmanaḥ*, his own; *āsanam*, seat; *na ati ucchritam*, neither too high; *na ati nīcam*, nor even too low; and that made of *caila-ajina-kuśa-uttram*, cloth, skin, and *kuśa*-grass, placed successively one below the other—the successive arrangement of cloth etc. here is in a reverse order to that of the textual reading—.

What follows after thus establishing the seat?

Upaviśya, sitting; *tatra*, on that; *āsane*, seat; *yogam yuñjyāt*, he should concentrate his mind. To what purpose should he concentrate his mind? In answer the Lord says: *ātma-viśuddhaye*, for the purification of the internal organ. How? *Kṛtvā*, making; *manaḥ*, the mind; *ekāgram*, one-pointed, by withdrawing it from all objects; and *yata-citta-indriya-kriyaḥ*, keeping the

actions (*kriyāḥ*) of the mind (*citta*) and senses (*indriya*) under control (*yata*).

The external seat has been spoken of. Now is being stated how the posture of the body should be:

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन्॥१३॥

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः।
मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः॥१४॥

13. Holding the body, head and neck erect and still, being steady, looking at the tip of his own nose—and not looking around;

14. He should remain seated with a placid mind, free from fear, firm in the vow of a celibate, and with the mind fixed on Me by controlling it through concentration, having Me as the supreme Goal.

Dhārayan, holding; *kāya-śiro-grīvam*, the body (torso), head and neck; *samam*, erect; and *acalam*, still—movement is possible for one (even while) holding these erect; therefore it is specified, 'still'—; *sthiraḥ*, being steady, that is remaining steady; *samprekṣya*, looking *svam nāsikāgram*, at the tip of his own nose—looking at it intently, as it were; *ca*, and; *anavalokayan*, not looking; *diśaḥ*, around, that is not glancing now and then in various directions—. The words 'as it were' are to be understood because what is intended here is not an injunction for looking at the tip of one's own nose! What then? It is the fixing the gaze of the eyes by withdrawing it from external objects; and that is enjoined with a view to concentrating the mind. (77) If the intention were merely the looking at the tip of the nose, then the mind would remain fixed there itself, not on the Self! In, 'Making the mind fixed in the Self' (25), the Lord will speak of concentrating the mind verily on the Self. Therefore, owing to the missing word *iva* (as it were), it is merely the withdrawal of the gaze that is implied by *samprekṣya* (looking).

Further, *praśāntātmā*, with a placid mind, with a mind completely at peace; *vigata-bhīḥ*, free from fear *sthitaḥ*, firm; *brahmacāri-vrate*, in the vow of a celibate, the vow consisting in service of the teacher, eating food got by begging, etc.—firm in that, that is he should follow these; besides,

mat-cittaḥ, with the mind fixed on Me who am the supreme God; *samyamya*, by controlling; *manaḥ*, the mind, that is by stopping the modifications of the mind; *yuktaḥ*, through concentration, that is by becoming concentrated; *āsīta*, he should remain seated; *matparaḥ*, with Me as the supreme Goal. Some passionate person may have his mind on a woman, but he does not accept the woman as his supreme Goal. What then? He accepts the king or Śiva as his goal. But this one (the yogī) not only has his mind on Me but has Me as his Goal.

After that, now is being stated the result of Yoga:

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति॥१५॥

15. Concentrating the mind thus for ever, the yogī of controlled mind achieves the Peace which culminates in Liberation and which abides in Me.

Yuñjan, concentrating; *ātmānam*, the mind; *evam*, thus, according to the methods shown above; *sadā*, for ever; the yogī, *niyata-mānasaḥ*, of controlled mind; *adhi-gacchati*, achieves; *śāntim*, the Peace, the indifference to worldly attachments and possessions; *nirvāṇa-paramām*, which culminates in Liberation; and *mat-saṁsthām*, which abides in Me.

Now are being mentioned the rules about the yogī's food etc.:

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः।
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन॥१६॥

16. But, O Arjuna, Yoga is not for one who eats too much, nor for one who does not eat at all; neither for one who habitually sleeps too long, nor surely for one who keeps awake.

(*Tu*, but) O Arjuna, Yoga *na asti*, is not; *ati-aśnataḥ*, for one who eats too much, for one who eats food more than his capacity; *na ca*, nor is Yoga; *anaśnataḥ*, for one who does not eat; *ekāntam*, at all. This accords with the Vedic text, 'As is well known, if one eats that much food which is within one's capacity, then it sustains him, it does not hurt him; that which is more, it harms him; that which is less, it does not sustain him' (Śa. Bṛ.; Bo. Sm. 2.7.22). Therefore, a yogī should not eat food more or less than what is

suitable for him. Or the meaning is that Yoga is not for one who eats more food than what is prescribed for a yogī in the scriptures on Yoga. Indeed, the quantity has been mentioned in, 'One half of the stomach is to be filled with food including curries; the third quarter is to be filled with water; but the fourth quarter is to be left for the movement of air,' etc.

Similarly, Yoga is not for *ati svapna-śīlasya*, one who habitually sleeps too long; and Yoga is *na eva*, surely not; *jāgrataḥ*, for one who keeps awake too long.

How, again, does Yoga become possible? This is being stated:

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दु:खहा॥१७॥

17. Yoga becomes a destroyer of sorrow of one whose eating and movements are regulated, whose effort in works is moderate, and whose sleep and wakefulness are temperate.

Yogaḥ bhavati, Yoga becomes; *duḥkha-hā*, a destroyer of sorrow—that which destroys (*hanti*) all sorrows (*duḥkhāni*)—, that is, Yoga destroys all worldly sorrows; *yukta-āhāra-vihārasya*, of one whose eating and movements are regulated—*āhāra* (lit. food) means all that is gathered in, (78) and *vihāra* means moving about, walking; one for whom these two are regulated (*yukta*) is *yukta-āhāra-vihāra*—; and also *yukta-ceṣṭasya*, of one whose effort (*ceṣṭā*) is moderate (*yukta*); *karmasu*, in works; similarly, *yukta-svapna-avabodhasya*, of one whose sleep (*svapna*) and wakefulness (*avabodha*) are temperate (*yukta*), have regulated periods. To him whose eating and movements are regulated, whose effort in work is moderate, whose sleep and wakefulness are temperate, Yoga becomes a destroyer of sorrows.

When does a man become concentrated? That is being presently stated:

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
नि:स्पृह: सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा॥१८॥

18. A man who has become free from hankering for all desirable objects is then said to be Self-absorbed when the controlled mind rests in the Self

alone.

A yogī, *niḥspṛhaḥ*, who has become free from hankering, thirst; *sarva-kāmebhyaḥ*, for all desirable objects, seen and unseen; is *tada*, then; *ucyate*, said to be; *yuktaḥ*, Self-absorbed; *yadā*, when; the *viniyatam*, controlled; *cittam*, mind, the mind that has been made fully one-pointed by giving up thought of external objects; *avatiṣṭhate*, rests; *ātmani eva*, in the non-dual Self alone, that is he gets established in his own Self.

An illustration in being given for the mind of that yogī which has become Self-absorbed:

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः॥१९॥

19. As a lamp kept in a windless place does not flicker, such is the simile thought of for the yogī whose mind is under control, and who is engaged in concentration on the Self.

Yathā, as; a *dīpaḥ*, lamp; *nivāta-sthaḥ*, kept in a windless place; *na iṅgate*, does not flicker; *sā upamā*, such is the simile—that with which something is compared is an *upamā* (simile)—; *smṛta*, thought of, by the knowers of Yoga who understand the movements of the mind; *yogīnaḥ*, for the yogī; *yata-citasya*, whose mind is under control; and *yuñjataḥ*, who is engaged in; *yogam*, concentration; *ātmanaḥ*, on the Self, that is who is practising Self-absorption.

By dint of practising Yoga thus, when the mind, comparable to a lamp in a windless place, becomes concentrated, then—

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया।
यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति॥२०॥

20. At the time when the mind restrained through the practice of Yoga gets withdrawn, and just when by seeing the Self by the self one remains contented in the Self alone; (79)

Yatra, at the time when; *cittam*, the mind; *niruddham*, restrained, entirely prevented from wandering; *uparamate*, gets withdrawn; *yoga-sevayā*, through the practice of Yoga; *ca*, and; *yatra eva*, just when, at the

very moment when; *paśyan*, by seeing, by experiencing; *ātmānam*, the Self, which by nature is the supreme light of Consciousness; *ātmanā*, by the self, by the mind purified by concentration; *tuṣyati*, one remains contented, gets delighted; *ātmani eva*, in one's own Self alone—. (80)

Besides,

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम्।
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः॥२१॥

21. When one experiences that absolute Bliss which can be intuited by the intellect and which is beyond the senses, and being established (thus) this person surely does not swerve from Reality;

Yatra, when, at the time when; *vetti*, one experiences; *tat*, that; *ātyantikam*, absolute—which is verily limitless, that is infinite; *sukham*, Bliss; *yat*, which; *buddhi-grāhyam*, can be intuited by the intellect, intuited by the intellect alone, without the help of the senses; and which is *atīndriyam*, beyond the senses, that is not objective; (—when one experiences this kind of Bliss) and *sthitaḥ*, being established in the nature of the Self; *ayam*, this person, the illumined one; *eva*, surely; *na calati*, does not swerve; *tattvataḥ*, from that Reality—that is does not deviate from the nature of Reality—.

Further,

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते॥२२॥

22. Obtaining which one does not think of any other acquisition to be superior to that, and being established in which one is not perturbed even by great sorrow;

Labdhvā, obtaining; *yam*, which—by acquiring which Self-attainment; *na manyate*, one does not think; that there is *aparam*, any other; *lābham*, acquisition; *tataḥ adhikam*, superior to that; and also, *sthitaḥ*, being established; *yasmin*, in which Reality of the Self; *na vicālyate*, one is not perturbed; *api*, even; *guruṇā*, by great; *duḥkhena*, sorrow, as may be caused by being struck with weapons, etc.—.

The yoga that has been spoken of as a particular state of the Self, distinguished by its characteristics in the verses beginning with ‘At the time when the mind gets withdrawn,’ (20) etc.—

तं विद्याद्दु:खसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम्।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा॥२३॥

23. One should know that severance of contact with sorrow to be what is called Yoga. That Yoga has to be practised with perseverance and with an undepressed heart.

Vidyāt, one should know; *tat*, that; *duḥkha-saṁyoga-viyogam*, severance (*viyoga*) of contact (*saṁyoga*) with sorrow (*duḥkha*); to be verily *yoga-sanjñitam*, what is called Yoga—that is one should know it through a negative definition.

After concluding the topic of the result of Yoga, the need for pursuing Yoga is again being spoken of in another way in order to enjoin ‘perseverance’ and ‘freedom from depression’ as the disciplines for Yoga: *Saḥ*, that; *yogaḥ*, Yoga, which has the results as stated above; *yoktavyaḥ*, has to be practised; *niścayena*, with perseverance; and *anirviṇṇacetasā*, with an undepressed heart. That which is not (*a*) depressed (*nirviṇṇam*) is *anirviṇṇam*. What is that? The heart. (One has to practise Yoga) with that heart which is free from depression. This is the meaning.

Again,

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषत:।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्तत:॥२४॥

शनै: शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया।
आत्मसंस्थं मन: कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत्॥२५॥

24. By totally eschewing all desires which arise from thoughts, and restraining with the mind itself all the organs from every side;

25. One should gradually withdraw with the intellect endowed with steadiness. Making the mind fixed in the Self, one should not think of anything whatsoever.

Tyaktvā, by eschewing; *aśeṣataḥ*, totally, without a trace; *sarvān*, all; the *kāmān*, desires; *saṅkalpa-prabhavān*, which arise from thoughts; and further, *viniyamya*, restraining; *manasā eva*, with the mind itself, with the mind endued with discrimination; *indriya-grāmam*, all the organs; *samantataḥ*, from every side; *uparamet*, one should withdraw, abstain; *śanaiḥ śanaiḥ*, gradually, not suddenly;—with what?—*buddhyā*, with the intellect;—possessed of what distinction?—*dhṛti-gṛhītayā*, endowed with steadiness, that is with fortitude.

Kṛtvā, making *manaḥ*, the mind; *ātma-saṁstham*, fixed in the Self, with the idea, 'The Self alone is all; there is nothing apart from It'—thus fixing the mind on the Self; *na cintayet*, one should not think of; *kiñcit api*, anything whatsoever.

This is the highest instruction about Yoga.

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥२६॥

26. (The yogī) should bring (this mind) under the subjugation of the Self Itself, by restraining it from all those causes whatever due to which the restless, unsteady mind wanders away.

In the beginning, the yogī who is thus engaged in making the mind established in the Self, *etat vaśam nayet*, should bring this (mind) under the subjugation; *ātmani eva*, of the Self Itself; *niyamya*, by restraining; *etat*, it; *tataḥ tataḥ*, from all those causes whatever, namely sound etc.; *yataḥ yataḥ*, due to which, due to whatever objects like sound etc.; the *cañcalam*, restless, very restless; and therefore *asthiram*, unsteady; *manaḥ*, mind; *niścarati*, wanders away, goes out due to its inherent defects. (It should be restrained) by ascertaining through discrimination those causes to be mere appearances, and with an attitude of detachment. Thus, through the power of practice of Yoga, the mind of the yogī merges in the Self Itself.

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥२७॥

27. Supreme Bliss comes to this yogī alone whose mind has become perfectly tranquil, whose (quality of) *rajas* has been eliminated, who has

become identified with Brahman, and is taintless.

Uttamam, supreme, unsurpassable; *sukham*, Bliss; *upaiti*, comes; *hi enam yoginam*, to this yogī alone; *praśānta-manasam*, whose mind has become perfectly tranquil; *śānta-rajasam*, whose (quality of) *rajas* has been eliminated, that is whose *rajas*, namely defects such as delusion etc. (81) have been destroyed; *brahma-bhūtam*, who has become identified with Brahman, who is free even while living, who has got the certitude that Brahman is all; and *akalmaṣam*, who is taintless, free from vice etc.

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते॥२८॥

28. By concentrating his mind constantly thus, the taintless yogī easily attains the absolute Bliss of contact with Brahman.

Sadā yuñjan, by constantly concentrating; *ātmānam*, his mind; *evam*, thus, in the process stated; *vigata-kalmaṣaḥ*, the taintless, sinless yogī, free from the obstacles to Yoga; *sukhena*, easily; *aśnute*, attains; *atyantam*, absolute—that which exists by transcending limits—, supreme, unsurpassable; *sukham*, Bliss; of *brahma-saṁsparśam*, contact with Brahman—the Bliss that is in touch (82) with the supreme Brahman.

Now is being shown that result of Yoga which is the realization of identity with Brahman and which is the cause of the extinction of the whole mundane existence. (83)

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः॥२९॥

29. One who has his mind Self-absorbed through Yoga, and who has the vision of sameness everywhere, sees his Self existing in everything, and everything in his Self.

Yoga-yukta-ātmā, one who has his mind Self-absorbed through Yoga, whose mind is merged in *samādhi*; and *sarvatra-sama-darśanaḥ*, who has the vision of sameness everywhere—who has the vision (*darśana*) of sameness (*sama-tva*), the knowledge of identity of the Self and Brahman everywhere (*sarvatra*) without exception, in all divergent objects beginning

from Brahmā to immovable things; *īkṣate*, sees; *ātmānam*, the Self, his own Self; *sarva-bhūta-stham*, existing in everything; and *sarva-bhūtāni*, everything from Brahma to a clump of grass; unified *ātmani*, in his Self.

The fruit of this realization of the unity of the Self is being stated:

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति॥३०॥

30. One who sees Me in everything, and sees all things in Me—I do not go out of his vision, and he also is not lost to My vision.

Yaḥ, one who; *paśyati*, sees; *mām*, Me, Vāsudeva, who am the Self of all; *sarvatra*, in all things; *ca*, and; sees *sarvam*, all things, all created things, beginning from Brahmā; *mayi*, in Me who am the Self of all;—*aham*, I who am God; *na praṇaśyāmi*, do not go out; *tasya*, of his vision—of one who has thus realized the unity of the Self; *ca saḥ*, and he also; *na praṇaśyati*, is not lost; *me*, to My vision. That man of realization does not get lost to Me, to Vāsudeva, because of the identity between him and Me, for that which is called one's own Self is surely dear to one, and since it is I alone who am the seer of the unity of the Self in all.

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते॥३१॥

31. That yogī who, being established in unity, adores Me as existing in all things, he exists in Me in whatever condition he may be.

This being so, that is after reiterating (in the first line of the present verse) the idea of full realization contained in the previous verse, the result of that (realization), namely Liberation, is being spoken of (in the second line): The yogī, the man of full realization; *vartate*, exists; *mayi*, in Me, in the supreme state of Viṣṇu; *sarvathā api*, in whatever condition; *vartamānaḥ*, he may be. He is verily ever-free. The idea is that he is not obstructed from Liberation by anything.

Furthermore,

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः॥३२॥

32. O Arjuna, that yogī is considered the best who judges what is happiness and sorrow in all beings by the same standard as he would apply to himself.

Ātma-aupamyena: *ātmā* means the self, that is oneself. That by which a comparison is made is an *upamā*. The abstract form of that is *aupamya*. *Ātma-aupamya* means a standard as would be applicable to oneself.

O Arjuna, *yaḥ*, he who; *paśyati*, judges; *sarvatra*, in all beings; *samam*, by the same standard, in the same manner; *ātma-aupamyena*, as he would apply to himself—. And what does he view with sameness? That is being stated: As *sukham*, happiness, is dear to me, so also is happiness agreeable to all creatures. *Vā*, and—the word *vā* is (used) in the sense of *and*; just as *yadi*, whatever; *duḥkham*, sorrow is unfavourable, unwelcome to me, so also is sorrow unwelcome and unfavourable to all creatures.

In this way, he looks upon happiness and sorrow as pleasant and unpleasant to all beings, by the same standard as he would apply to himself. He does not act against anyone. That is, he is non-injurious. He who is thus non-injurious and steadfast in full Illumination, *saḥ*, that yogī; *paramaḥ mataḥ*, is considered as the best among all the yogīs.

Noticing that his Yoga—as spoken of and consisting in full Illumination—is hard to acquire, Arjuna, with a view to hearing the sure means to its attainment, said:

Arjuna said:

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन।
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात् स्थितिं स्थिराम्॥३३॥

33. O Madhusūdana (Kṛṣṇa), this Yoga that has been spoken of by You as sameness, I do not see its steady continuance, owing to the restlessness (of the mind).

O Madhusūdana, *ayam*, this; *yogaḥ*, Yoga; *yaḥ proktaḥ*, that has been spoken of; *tvayā*, by You; *sāmyena*, as sameness; *na paśyāmi*, I do not see, I cannot conceive;—what?—*etasya*, its; *sthirām*, steady, undisturbed; *sthitim*,

continuance; *cañcalatvāt*, owing to the unsteadiness of the mind, which is well known.

चञ्चलं हि मन: कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम्।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम्॥३४॥

34. For, O Kṛṣṇa, the mind is unsteady, turbulent, strong and obstinate. I consider its control to be as greatly difficult as of the wind.

Hi, for, O Kṛṣṇa—the word *kṛṣṇa* is derived from the root *kṛṣ*, (84) in the sense of 'uprooting'; He is Kṛṣṇa because He uproots the defects such as sin etc. of devotees—; *manaḥ*, the mind; is *cañcalam*, unsteady. Not only is it very unsteady, it is also *pramāthi*, turbulent. It torments, agitates, the body and the organs. It brings them under extraneous control. Besides, it is *balavat*, strong, not amenable to anybody's restraint. Again, it is *dṛḍham*, obstinate, hard as the (large shark called) *Tantu-nāga* (also known as *Varuṇa-pāśa*).

Aham, I; *manye*, consider; *tasya*, its—of the mind which is of this kind; *nigrahaḥ*, control, restraint; to be (*suduṣkaram*, greatly difficult;) *vayoḥ iva*, as of the wind. Control of the wind is difficult. I consider the control of the mind to be even more difficult than that. This is the idea.

'This is just as you say.'

The Blessed Lord said:

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते॥३५॥

35. O mighty-armed one, undoubtedly the mind is untractable and restless. But, O son of Kuntī, it is brought under control through practice and detachment.

Mahābāho, O mighty-armed one; *asaṁśayam*, undoubtedly—there is no doubt with regard to this; that the *manaḥ*, mind; is *durnigraham*, untractable; and *calam*, restless. *Tu*, but; it—the modifications of the mind in the form of distractions—*gṛhyate*, is brought under control; *abhyāsena*, through practice—*abhyāsa* means repetition of some idea or thought of the mind on some mental plane (85)—; and *vairāgyeṇa*, through detachment—

vairāgya means absence of hankering for enjoyment of desirable things, seen or unseen, as a result of the practice of discerning their defects.

That mind is thus brought under control, restrained, that is completely subdued.

By him, however, who has not controlled his mind—

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः।
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः॥३६॥

36. My conviction is that Yoga is difficult to be attained by one of uncontrolled mind. But it is possible to be attained through the (above) means by one who strives and has a controlled mind.

Me, My; *matiḥ*, conviction; is *iti*, that; Yoga is *duṣprāpaḥ*, difficult to be attained; *asaṁyata-ātmanā*, by one of uncontrolled mind, by one who has not controlled his mind, the internal organ, by practice and detachment. *Tu*, but, on the other hand; *śakyaḥ*, Yoga is possible; *avāptum*, to be attained; *yatatā*, by one who strives, who repeatedly makes effort; *upāyataḥ*, through the means described above; and *vaśyātmanā*, by one of controlled mind, by him whose mind has been brought under control through practice and detachment.

As to that, by accepting the practice of Yoga, actions leading to the attainment of this or the next world may be renounced by a yogī, and yet he may not attain the result of perfection in Yoga, that is full Illumination, which is the means to Liberation. Consequently, at the time of death his mind may waver from the path of Yoga. Apprehending that he may be thereby ruined,

Arjuna said:

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः।
अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति॥३७॥

37. O Kṛṣṇa, failing to achieve perfection in Yoga, what goal does one attain who, though possessed of faith, is not diligent and whose mind becomes deflected from Yoga?

O Kṛṣṇa, *aprāpya*, failing to achieve; *yoga-saṁ-siddhim*, perfection in Yoga, the result of Yoga, that is full Illumination; *kām gatim*, what goal; *gacchati*, does one attain; who, though *upetaḥ śraddhayā*, possessed of faith, belief in God and in the other world; is *ayatiḥ*, not diligent, devoid of effort on the path of Yoga; and, at the time of death, too, *calita-mānasaḥ*, whose mind becomes deflected; *yogāt*, from Yoga, (that is) whose memory has been lost?

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मण: पथि॥३८॥

38. O Mighty-armed one, fallen from both, without support, deluded on the path to Brahman, does he not get ruined like a scattered cloud?

Mahābāho, O Mighty-armed one; *ubhaya-vibhraṣṭaḥ*, fallen from both, having fallen from the Path of Action and the Path of Yoga; *apratiṣṭhaḥ*, without support; *vimūḍhaḥ*, deluded—having become deluded; *brahmaṇaḥ pathi*, on the path of Brahman, on the path leading to Brahman; *kaccit na*, does he not; *naśyati*, get ruined; *iva*, like; a *chinna-abhram*, scattered cloud? Or is it that he does not?

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषत:।
त्वदन्य: संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते॥३९॥

39. O Kṛṣṇa, You should totally eradicate this doubt of mine. For, none other than Yourself can be the dispeller of this doubt!

O Kṛṣṇa, *arhasi*, You should; *aśeṣataḥ*, totally; *chettum*, eradicate, remove; *etat*, this; *saṁśayam*, doubt; *me*, of mine. *Hi*, for; *na tvad anyaḥ*, none other than You, be he a sage or a god; *upapadyate*, can be; *chettā*, the dispeller, the destroyer; *asya*, of this; *saṁśayasya*, doubt. Therefore you Yourself should dispel (the doubt). This is the meaning.

The Blessed Lord said:

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते।
नहि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति॥४०॥

40. O Pārtha, there is certainly no ruin for him here or hereafter. For, no one engaged in good meets with a deplorable end, My son!

O Pārtha, *eva vidyate*, there is certainly; *na vināśaḥ*, no ruin; *tasya*, for him; *iha*, here, in this world; or *amutra*, hereafter, in the other world. Ruin means a birth inferior to the previous one; that is not there for one who has fallen from Yoga. Hi, for; *na kaścit*, no one; *kalyāṇa-kṛt*, engaged in good; *gacchati*, meets with; *durgatim*, a deplorable end; *tāta*, My son! A father is called *tāta* because he perpetuates himself (*tanoti*) through the son. Since the father himself becomes the son, therefore the son also is called *tāta*. A disciple is called putra (son). (86)

But what happens to him?

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वती: समा:।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते॥४१॥

41. Attaining the worlds of the righteous, and residing there for eternal years, the man fallen from Yoga is born in the house of the pious and the prosperous.

Prāpya, attaining, reaching, *lokān*, the worlds; *puṇya-kṛtām*, of the righteous, of the performers of the Horse-sacrifice, etc.; and *uṣitvā*, residing there, enjoying the stay; for *śāśvatīh*, eternal; *samāḥ*, years; (then,) when the period of enjoyment is over, the *yoga-bhraṣṭaḥ*, man fallen from Yoga, the one who had set out on the path Yoga, that is a monk—as understood from the force of the context; (87) *abhijāyate*, is born; *gehe*, in the house; *śucīnām*, of the pious, who perform actions according to scriptural instructions; and *śrīmatām*, who are prosperous.

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम्।
एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम्॥४२॥

42. Or he is born in the family of wise yogīs (88) only. Such a birth as is of this kind is surely more difficult to get in the world.

Athavā, or; *bhavati*, he is born; *kule*, in the family; *dhīmatām*, of wise; *yoginām*, yogīs; *eva*, only, who are poor—which is different from the family of the prosperous. *Etat janma*, such a birth; *yat īdṛśam*, as is of this

kind—a birth that is in the family of poor yogīs, in a family as described; is *hi*, surely; *durlabha-taram*, more difficult to get, as compared with the earlier one; *loke*, in the world.

Because,

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम्।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन॥४३॥

43. There he becomes endowed with that wisdom acquired in the previous body. And he strives more than before for perfection, O scion of the Kuru dynasty.

Tatra, there, in the family of yogīs; *labhate tam buddhisaṁyogam*, he becomes endowed with that wisdom; *paurva-dehikam*, acquired in the previous body. And *yatate*, he strives; *bhūyaḥ*, more intensely; *tataḥ*, than before, more intensely than that tendency acquired in the previous birth; *saṁsiddhau*, for, for the sake of, perfection; *kuru-nandana*, O scion of the Kuru dynasty.

How does he become endowed with the wisdom acquired in the previous body? That is being answered:

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते॥४४॥

44. For, by that very past practice, he is carried forward even in spite of himself! Even a seeker of Yoga transcends the result of the performance of Vedic rituals!

Hi, for; *tena eva*, by that very; *pūrva-abhyāsena*, past practice—the powerful habit formed in the past life; *hriyate*, he, the yogī who had fallen from Yoga, is carried forward; *avaśaḥ api*, even in spite of himself. If he had not committed any act which could be characterized as unrighteous etc. and more powerful than the tendency created by the practice of Yoga, then he is carried forward by the tendency created by the practice of Yoga. If he had committed any unrighteous act which was more powerful, then, even the tendency born of Yoga gets surely overpowered. But when that is exhausted, the tendency born of Yoga begins to take effect by itself. The

idea is that it does not get destroyed, even though it may lie in abeyance over a long period.

Jijñasuḥ api, even a seeker; *yogasya*, of Yoga from the force of the context, the person implied is a monk who had engaged in the path of Yoga with a desire to know his true nature, but had fallen from Yoga—; even he, *ativartate*, transcends—will free himself from; *śabda-brahma*, the result of the performance of Vedic ritual. What to speak of him who, after understanding Yoga, may undertake it with steadfastness!

And why is the state of Yoga higher?

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम्॥४५॥

45. However, the yogī, applying himself assiduously, becoming purified from sin and attaining perfection through many births, thereby achieves the highest Goal.

The *yogī*, the man of Knowledge; *yatamānaḥ*, applying himself; *prayatnāt*, assiduously, that is striving more intensely; and as a result, *saṁśuddha-kilbiṣaḥ*, becoming purified from sin; and *aneka-janma-saṁsiddhaḥ*, attaining perfection through many births—gathering together tendencies little by little in many births, and attaining perfection through that totality of impressions acquired in many births; *tataḥ*, thereby coming to have full Illumination; *yāti*, achieves; the *parām*, highest, most perfect; *gatim*, Goal.

Since this is so, therefore:

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन॥४६॥

46. A yogī is higher than men of austerity; he is considered higher even than men of knowledge. The yogī is also higher than men of action. Therefore, O Arjuna, do you become a yogī.

A yogī is *adhikaḥ*, higher; *tapasvibhyaḥ*, than men of austerity; he is *mataḥ*, considered; *adhikaḥ*, higher than, superior to; *api*, even; *jñānibhyaḥ*, men of knowledge. Jñāna here means scriptural learning. (A

yogī is superior) to even those who possess that (learning). The yogī is *adhikaḥ*, higher, greater; *karmibhyaḥ*, than men of action—*karma* means Agnihotra etc.; (greater) than those who adhere to them. Since this is so, *tasmāt*, therefore; O Arjuna, *bhava*, do you become a yogī.

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना।
श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः॥४७॥

47. Even among all the yogīs, he who adores Me with his mind fixed on Me and with faith, he is considered by Me to be the best of the yogīs.

Api, even; *sarveṣām yoginām*, among all the yogīs, among those who are immersed in meditation on Rudra, Āditya, and others; *yaḥ*, he who; *bhajate*, adores; *mām*, Me; *antarātmanā*, with his mind; *madgatena*, fixed on Me, concentrated on Me who am Vāsudeva; and *śraddhāvān*, with faith, becoming filled with faith; *saḥ*, he; is *mataḥ*, considered; *me*, by Me; to be *yukta-tamaḥ*, the best of the yogīs, engaged in Yoga most intensely. (89)

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[66] The verses 37–9 refer to the fall of a *monk* who had to renounce all actions (rites and duties) before espousing monasticism. This fact indirectly points out that the injunction about one having to perform actions throughout life does not apply in the case of some people (e.g. monks).

[67] Brahman being self-existent, It cannot be the product of rites and duties; and yet, rites and duties must have some result because they have been enjoined by the Vedas.

[68] Meditation, because of its very nature, is practised in solitude. Therefore, if the word *ekākī* (alone) were interpreted as prohibiting the participation (in meditation) of the wife of a householder, who otherwise needs her presence during all such Vedic rites as Agnihotra etc., that would amount to a prohibition against a situation that does not arise at all.

[69] viz *Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya, Anvāhārya-pacana*, etc.

[70] Thoughts about an object lead to the desire for it, which in turn leads to actions for getting it. (Also see note under 4.19)

[71] *Verily*: This word emphasizes the fact that, since attachment to sense objects like sound etc. and to actions is an obstacle in the path of Yoga, therefore the removal of that obstruction is the means to its attainment.

[72] Aṣṭ. has this additional word, *ātmā*, self.—Tr.

[73] If the body and organs are under control, they are helpful in concentrating one's mind on the Self; but, if they are not under control, they oppose this concentration.

[74] These words are supplied to complete the sentence.

[75] *Ari* (foe) is one who does harm behind one's back.

[76] *Dvesyaḥ* is one who is openly hateful.

[77] What is sought to be presented here as the primary objective is the concentration of mind. If the gaze be directed outward, then it will result in interrupting that concentration. Therefore the purpose is to first fix the gaze of the eyes within.

[78] According to the Commentator, *āhāra*, which also means food, includes mental 'food' as well. See Ch. 7.26.2.—Tr.

[79] Ā.G. construes the word *eva* (certainly) with *tuṣyati* (remains contented).—Tr.

[80] *Samādhi* is of two kinds, *Samprajñāta* and *Asamprajñāta*. The concentration called right knowledge (*Samprajñāta*) is that which is followed by reasoning, discrimination, bliss and unqualified egoism. *Asamprajñāta* is that which is attained by the constant practice of cessation of all mental activity, in which the *citta* retains only the unmanifested impressions.—Cf. C. W., Vol. I, 1962, pp. 210, 212.

According to Ā.G. the verses up to 6.20 state in a general way the characteristics of *samādhi*. From the present verse to the 25th, *Asamprajñāta-samādhi* is introduced and defined.—Tr.

[81] ‘The five *kleśas*, pain-bearing obstructions, are: ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life’ (P.Y.Sū.2.3).

[82] *In touch with*, that is identified with, homogeneous with, in essential oneness with.

[83] Liberation is conceived of in two ways—total cessation of sorrows, and attainment of unsurpassable Bliss.

[84] Another derivative meaning may be—‘the capacity to draw towards Himself all glorious things of this and the other world’.

[85] ‘Some mental plane’ suggests some object of concentration.

[86] Śrī Kṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna thus because the latter was his disciple.

[87] From Arjuna’s question it might appear that he was asking about the fate of people who fall from both the paths, namely that of Karma and of Meditation. But the possibility of getting ruined by performing actions (rites and duties) according to Vedic instructions does not arise, since their results are inevitable. However, the question of ruin is relevant in the case of a monk, for on the one hand he has renounced actions, and on the other he may fail to attain perfection in Yoga in the present life. Hence, the Lord’s answer relates to the fall and ruin of a monk alone.

[88] Persons possessing knowledge of Brahman. (Ś. concedes that some rare householders also can have this knowledge, and he cites the instances of Vaśiṣṭha, Agastya, Janaka and Aśvapati of olden days, and Vācaspati and the author of Khaṇḍa of recent times.)

[89] It has been shown thus far that Karma-yoga has monasticism as its ultimate culmination. And in the course of expounding Dhyāna-yoga together with its auxiliaries, and instructing about the means to control the mind, the Lord rules out the possibility of absolute ruin for a person fallen from Yoga. He has also stated that steadfastness in Knowledge is for a man who knows the meaning of the word *tvam* (thou) (in ‘Thou are That’). All these instructions amount to declaring that Liberation comes from the knowledge of the great Upaniṣadic saying, ‘Thou art That.’

CHAPTER 7

JÑĀNA AND VIJÑĀNA

After giving rise to an occasion for further enquiry in the verse, 'Even among all the yogīs, he who adores Me with his mind fixed on Me and with faith, he is considered by Me to be the best of the yogīs', (now) with a view to instructing that 'the reality about Myself is of this kind, and one should have his mind fixed on Me in this way,' (90) on His own—

The Blessed Lord said:

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु॥१॥

1. O Pārtha, hear how you, having the mind fixed on Me, practising the Yoga of Meditation and taking refuge in Me, will know Me with certainty and in fullness.

O Pārtha, *mayi āsaktamanāḥ*, having the mind fixed on Me—one whose mind (*manaḥ*) is fixed (*āsakta*) on Me (*mayi*) who am the supreme God possessed of the qualifications going to be spoken of—.

Yogam yuñjan, practising the Yoga of Meditation, concentrating the mind—.

Madāśrayaḥ, taking refuge in Me—one to whom I Myself, the supreme Lord, am the refuge (*āśraya*) is *madāśrayaḥ*—.

Anyone who hankers after some human objective resorts to some rite such as the Agnihotra etc., austerity or charity, which is the means to its attainment. This yogī, however, accepts only Me as his refuge; rejecting any other means, he keeps his mind fixed on Me alone.

Sṛṇu, hear; *tat*, that, which is being spoken of by Me; as to *yathā*, how, the process by which; you who, having become thus, *jñāsyasi*, will know; *mām*, Me; *asaṁśayam*, with certainty, without doubt, that the Lord is such indeed; and *samagram*, in fullness, possessed of such qualities as greatness, strength, power, majesty, etc. (91) in their fullness.

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषत:।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते॥२॥

2. I shall tell you in detail of this Knowledge which is combined with realization, (92) after experiencing which there remains nothing else here to be known again.

Aham, I; *vakṣyāmi*, shall tell; *te*, you; *aśeṣataḥ*, in detail, fully; of that (Knowledge) about Myself, which is *idam*, this; *jñānam*, Knowledge; which is *savijñānam*, combined with realization, associated with personal enlightenment; *yat jñātvā*, after experiencing which Knowledge; *avaśiṣyate*, there remains; *na anyat*, nothing else, anything that can be a means to human ends; *jñātavyam*, to be known; *bhūyaḥ*, again; *iha*, here. (In this way) the Lord praises that Knowledge which is intended to be spoken, in order to draw the attention of the hearer.

Thus, 'he who knows Me in reality becomes omniscient.' This is the idea. Therefore Knowledge is difficult to attain because of its super-excellent result.

How so? This is being answered:

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वत:॥३॥

3. Among thousands of men a rare one endeavours for perfection. Even of the perfected ones who are diligent, one perchance knows Me in truth.

Sahasreṣu manuṣyāṇām, among thousands, among a multitude of men; *kaścit*, a rare one; *yatati*, endeavours; *siddhaye*, for perfection. (93) *Siddhānām api*, even of the perfected ones; *yatatām*, who are diligent—they (those diligent ones themselves) being (considered to be) verily perfect because they are striving for Liberation; of them—; *kaścit*, one perchance, indeed; *vetti*, knows; *mām*, Me; *tattvataḥ*, in truth.

Having drawn the attention of the hearer by arousing interest, the Lord says:

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायु: खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा॥४॥

4. This Prakṛti of Mine is divided eight-fold thus: earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intellect and also egoism.

Iyam, this; *prakṛtiḥ*, Prakṛti, (94) the divine power called Māyā; *me*, of Mine, as described; *bhinnā*, is divided; *aṣṭadhā*, eight-fold; *iti*, thus: *bhūmiḥ*, earth—not the gross earth but the subtle element called earth, this being understood from the statement, 'Prakṛti (of Mine) is divided eight-fold'. Similarly, the subtle elements alone are referred to even by the words *water* etc.

Apaḥ, water; *analaḥ*, fire; *vāyuḥ*, air; *kham*, space; *manaḥ*, mind. By 'mind' is meant its source, egoism. By *buddhiḥ*, intellect, is meant the principle called *mahat (95)* which is the source of egoism. By *ahaṅkāraḥ*, egoism, is meant the Unmanifest, associated (96) with (Cosmic) ignorance. As food mixed with poison is called poison, similarly the Unmainfest, which is the primordial Cause, is called egoism since it is imbued with the impressions resulting from egoism; and egoism is the impelling force (of all). It is indeed seen in the world that egoism is the impelling cause behind all endeavour.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम्।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत्॥५॥

5. O mighty-armed one, this is the inferior (Prakṛti). Know the other Prakṛti of Mine which, however, is higher than this, which has taken the from of individual souls, and by which this world is upheld.

O mighty-armed one, *iyam*, this; is *aparā*, the inferior (Prakṛti)—not the higher, (but)—the impure, the source of evil and having the nature of worldly bondage. *Viddhi*, know; *anyām*, the other, pure; *prakṛtim*, Prakṛti; *me*, of Mine, which is essentially Myself; which, *tu*, however; is *parām*, higher, more exalted; *itaḥ*, than this (Prakṛti) already spoken of; *Jīva-bhūtām*, which has taken the form of the individual souls, which is characterized as 'the Knower of the body (field)', and which is the cause of sustenance of life; and *yayā*, by which Prakṛti; *idam*, this; *jagat*, world; *dhāryate*, is upheld, by permeating it.

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय।

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगत: प्रभव: प्रलयस्तथा॥६॥

6. Understand thus that all things (sentient and insentient) have these as their source. I am the origin as also the end of the whole Universe.

Upadhāraya, understand; *iti*, thus; that *sarvāṇi*, all; *bhūtāni*, things; *etat-yonīni*, have these (*etat*) as their source (*yoni*)—things that have these lower and higher Prakṛtis, characterized as the 'field' and the 'Knower of the field (body)', as their source are *etat-yonīni*. Since My two Prakṛtis are the source, the cause of all things, therefore, *aham*, I; am the *prabhavaḥ*, origin; *tathā*, as also; the *pralayaḥ*, end, the termination; *kṛtsnasya*, of the whole; *jagataḥ*, Universe.

The meaning is this: I, who am the omniscient God, am the source of the Universe through My two Prakṛtis.

Since this is so, therefore—

मत्त: परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव॥७॥

7. O Dhanañjaya, there is nothing else whatsoever higher than Myself. All this is strung on Me like pearls on a string.

O Dhanañjaya, *asti*, there is; *na anyat kiñcit*, nothing else whatsoever, no other cause; *parataram*, higher; *mattaḥ*, than Me, the supreme God; that is I Myself am the source of the world. Since this is so, therefore, *sarvam*, all; *idam*, this, all things, the Universe; *protam*, is strung, woven, connected, that is transfixed; *mayi*, on Me, the supreme God; like cloth in the warp, (97) and *iva*, like; *maṇigaṇāḥ*, pearls; *sutre*, on a string.

'What qualities are You endowed with, by virtue of which all this is strung on You?' This is being answered:

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभाऽस्मि शशिसूर्ययो:।
प्रणव: सर्ववेदेषु शब्द: खे पौरुषं नृषु॥८॥

8. O son of Kuntī, I am the taste of water, I am the effulgence of the moon and the sun; (the letter) Om in all the Vedas, the sound in space, and manhood in men.

Kaunteya, O son of Kuntī, *aham,* I; am *rasaḥ,* the taste, which is the essence of water. The idea is that water is dependent on Me who am its essence. This is how it is to be understood in every case. Just as I am the essence of water, similarly, *asmi,* I am; the *prabhā,* effulgence; *śaśi-sūryayoḥ,* of the moon and the sun; *praṇavaḥ,* (the letter) *Om*; *sarva-vedeṣu,* in all the Vedas. All the Vedas are established on Me who am that *Om*. So also (I am) *śabdaḥ,* the sound; *khe*, in space, as the essence. Space is established on Me who am that (sound). In the same way, *nṛṣu,* in men; (I am) *pauruṣam,* manhood—the quality of being man, from which arises the idea of manhood. Men are established on Me who am such.

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ।
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु॥९॥

9. I am also the sweet fragrance in the earth; I am the brilliance in the fire, and the life in all beings; and I am the austerity of the ascetics.

I am also the *puṇyaḥ,* sweet; *gandhaḥ,* fragrance; *pṛthivyām,* in the earth. The earth is dependent on Me who am its fragrance. The natural sweetness of smell in the earth is cited by way of suggesting sweetness of taste of water etc. as well. But foulness of smell etc. is due to contact with particular things, resulting from nescience, unholiness, etc. of worldly people.

Ca, and; *asmi,* I am; the *tejaḥ,* brilliance; *vibhāvasau,* in fire; so also (I am) the *jīvanam,* life—that by which all creatures live; *sarva-bhūteṣu,* in all beings. And I am the *tapaḥ,* austerity; *tapasviṣu,* of ascetics. Ascetics are established in Me who am that austerity.

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम्।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्॥१०॥

10. O Pārtha, know Me to be the eternal Seed of all beings. I am the intellect of the intelligent, I am the courage of the courageous.

O Pārtha, *viddhi,* know, *mām,* Me; to be the *sanātanam,* eternal; *bījam,* seed, the source of growth; *sarva-bhūtānām,* of all beings. Besides, I am the *buddhiḥ,* intellect, the power of discrimination of the mind; *buddhimatām,*

of the intelligent, of people having the power of discrimination. I am the *tejaḥ*, courage; *tejasvinām*, of the courageous, of those possessed of that.

बलं बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम्।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ॥११॥

11. And of the strong I am the strength which is devoid of passion and attachment. Among creatures I am desire which is not contrary to righteousness, O scion of the Bharata dynasty.

I am the *balam*, strength, ability, virility; *balavatām*, of the strong. That strength, again, is *kāma-rāga-vivarjitam*, devoid of passion and attachment. *Kāmaḥ* is passion, hankering for things not at hand. *Rāgaḥ* is attachment, fondness for things acquired. I am the strength that is devoid of them and is necessary merely for the maintenance of the body etc., but not that strength of the worldly which causes hankering and attachment.

Further, *bhūteṣu*, among creatures; I am that *kāmaḥ*, desire—such desires as for eating, drinking, etc. which are for the mere maintenance of the body etc.; which is *dharma-aviruddhaḥ*, not contrary to righteousness, not opposed to scriptural injunctions; *bharatarṣabha*, O scion of the Bharata dynasty.

Moreover,

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि॥१२॥

12. Those things that indeed are made of (the quality of) *sattva*, and those things that are made of (the quality of) *rajas* and *tamas*, know them to have sprung from Me alone. However, I am not in them; they are in Me!

Ye bhāvāḥ, those things; *sāttvikāḥ eva*, that indeed are made of (the quality of) *sattva*; and *ye rājasāḥ*, those that are made (of the quality) of *rajas*; and *tāmasāḥ*, those that are made of (the quality of) *tamas*—whatever things are made (of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) according to the creatures's own actions: *viddhi*, know; *tān*, them, all without exception; *mattaḥ eva iti*, to have sprung from Me alone when they come into being. Although they originate from Me, still, *tu*, however; *aham*, I; am *na teṣu*,

not in them—I am not subject to them, not under their control, as are the transmigrating beings. *Te*, they, again; *mayi*, are in Me, subject to Me, under My control. (98)

'The world does not know Me, the supreme Lord, even though I am of this kind, and am eternal, pure, intelligent and free by nature, (99) the Self of all beings, free from all qualities, the cause of burning away the seed of the evil of transmigration!'—in this way the Lord expresses regret. And what is the source of that ignorance in the world? That is being stated:

त्रिभिर्गु;णमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत्।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम्॥१३॥

13. All this world, deluded as it is by these three things made of the *guṇas* (qualities), does not know Me who am transcendental to these and undecaying.

Sarvam, all; *idam*, this; *jagat*, world, the aggregate of creatures; *mohitam*, deluded as it is—made to have indiscrimination; *ebhiḥ*, by these; aforesaid *tribhiḥ*, three; *bhavaiḥ*, things, in the forms of attachment, repulsion, delusion, etc; and *guṇamayaiḥ*, made of the *guṇas*, of the transformations of the *guṇas*; *na abhijānāti*, does not know; *mām*, Me; who am *param*, transcendental to, distinct, different; *ebhyaḥ*, from these *guṇas* as referred to above; and am *avyayam*, undecaying, that is free from all (the six kinds of) changes in things, viz. birth etc. (100)

How, again, do they cross over this divine Māyā of Viṣṇu, constituted by the three *guṇas*? That is being stated:

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते॥१४॥

14. Since this divine Māyā of Mine which is constituted by the *guṇas* is difficult to cross over, (therefore) those who take refuge in Me alone cross over this Māyā.

Hi, since; *eṣā*, this, aforesaid; *daivī*, divine; Māyā *mama*, of Mine, of God, of Viṣṇu, which (Māyā) is My own; and which is *guṇa-mayī*, constituted by the *guṇas*; is *duratyayā*, difficult to cross over; therefore,

this being so, *ye*, those who; wholeheartedly *prapadyante*, take refuge; *mām eva*, in Me alone, in Me who am the Master of Māyā and who am their own Self, by giving up all forms of rites and duties; *te*, they; *taranti*, cross over; *etām*, this; *māyām*, Māyā, which deludes all beings. That is to say, they become freed from the bondage of the world.

'If it is that those who resort to You cross over this Māyā, why then do not all take refuge in You alone?' This is being answered:

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढा: प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमा:।
माययाऽपहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिता:॥१५॥

15. The foolish evildoers, who are the most depraved among men, who are deprived of (their) wisdom by Māyā, and who resort to demoniacal ways, do not take refuge in Me.

Mūḍhāḥ, the foolish; *duṣkṛtinaḥ*, evildoers, sinners; who are *nara-adhamāḥ*, the most depraved among men; who are also *apa-hṛta-jñānāḥ*, deprived of, despoiled of (their) wisdom; *māyayā*, by Māyā; and *āśritāḥ*, who resort to; *āsuram bhāvam*, demoniacal, ways, such as cruelty, untruthfulness, etc.; *na*, do not; *prapadyante*, take refuge; *mām*, in Me, the supreme God.

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जना: सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ॥१६॥

16. O Arjuna, foremost of the Bharata dynasty, four classes of people of virtuous deeds adore Me: the afflicted, the seeker of Knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the man of Knowledge.

Again, O Arjuna, foremost of the Bharata dynasty, *caturvidhāḥ*, four classes; of *janāḥ*, people; who are eminent among human beings and are pious in actions, and are *sukṛtinaḥ*, of virtuous deeds; *bhajante*, adore; *mām*, Me; *ārtaḥ*, the afflicted—one who is overcome by sorrow, who is in distress, (101) being overwhelmed by thieves, tigers, disease, etc.; *jijñāsuḥ*, the seeker of Knowledge, who wants to know the reality of the Lord; *arthārthī*, the seeker of wealth; and *jñānī*, the man of Knowledge, (102) who knows the reality of Viṣṇu.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः॥१७॥

17. Of them, the man of Knowledge, endowed with constant steadfastness and one-pointed devotion, excels. For I am very much dear to the man of Knowledge, and he too is dear to Me.

Teṣām, of them, among the four; *jñānī*, the man of Knowledge, the knower of Reality, is *nitya-yuktaḥ*, endowed with constant steadfastness as a result of being a knower of Reality; and he also becomes *eka-bhaktiḥ*, endowed with one-pointed devotion, because he finds no one else whom he can adore. Consequently, that person of one-pointed devotion *viśiṣyate*, excels, becomes superior, that is he surpasses (the others).

Hi, since; I, the Self, am *priyaḥ*, dear; *jñāninaḥ*, to the man of Knowledge; therefore *aham*, I; am *atyartham*, very much; *priyaḥ*, dear to him. It is indeed a well known fact in the world that the Self is dear. The meaning, therefore, is that Vāsudeva, being the Self of the man of Knowledge, is dear to him. And *saḥ*, he, the man of Knowledge, being the very Self of Me who am Vāsudeva; is very much *priyaḥ*, dear; *mama*, to Me.

'If that be so, then the other three—the afflicted and the others are not dear to Vāsudeva?' 'This is not so!' 'What then?'

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम्।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम्॥१८॥

18. All of these, indeed, are noble, but the man of Knowledge is the very Self. (This is) My opinion. For, with a steadfast mind, he is set on the path leading to Me alone who am the super-excellent Goal.

Sarve ete, all of these three, without exception; are *eva*, indeed, *udārāḥ*, noble, that is; they are verily dear to Me. For, no devotee of Mine can become disagreeable to Me who am Vāsudeva. But the man of Knowledge becomes very much dear. This is the difference.

Why is this so? In answer the Lord says: *Tu* but; *jñānī*, the man of Knowledge; is *ātmā eva*, the very Self, not different from Me. This is me,

My; *matam*, opinion, conviction. *Hi*, for; *yuktātmā*, with a steadfast mind—having his mind absorbed in the idea, 'I am verily Vāsudeva, the Lord, and none else', that man of Knowledge *āsthitaḥ*, is set on the path leading to, he is engaged in ascending to, going to; *mām eva*, Me alone, to the supreme Brahman; who am the *anuttamām gatim*, super-excellent Goal to be reached.

The man of Knowledge is being eulogized again:

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः॥१९॥

19. At the end of many births the man of Knowledge attains Me, (realizing) that Vāsudeva is all. Such a high-souled one is very rare.

Ante, at the end, after the completion; *bahūnām*, of many; *janmanām*, births, which becme the repository for accumulating (103) the tendencies leading to Knowledge; *jñānavān*, the man of Knowledge, who has got his Knowledge matured; directly *prapadyate*, attains; *mām*, Me, Vāsudeva, who am the inmost Self; (realizing)—in what way?—*iti*, that; Vāsudeva is *sarvam*, all. *Saḥ*, such a one, who realizes Me (104) thus as the Self of all; is *mahātmā*, a high-souled one. There is none else who can equal or excel him. Therefore he is *su-durlabhaḥ*, very rare among thousands of men, as it has been said (in verse 3).

The reason why one does not realize that all this is verily Vāsudeva, the Self, is being stated:

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया॥२०॥

20. People, deprived of their wisdom by desires for various objects and guided by their own nature, resort to other deities following the relevant methods.

People, *hṛta-jñānāḥ*, deprived of their wisdom, deprived of their discriminating knowledge; *taiḥ taiḥ kāmaiḥ*, by desires for various objects, such as progeny, cattle, heaven, etc.; and *niyatāḥ*, guided, compelled; *svayā prakṛtyā*, by their own nature, by particular tendencies gathered in the past

lives; *prapadyante*, resort; *anya-devatāḥ*, to other deities, who are different from Vāsudeva, the Self; *āsthāya*, following, taking the help of; *tam tam niyamam*, the relevant methods—those processes that are well known for the adoration of the concerned deities.

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयाऽर्चितुमिच्छति।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम्॥२१॥

21. Whichever form (of a deity) any devotee wants to worship with faith, that very firm faith of his I strengthen.

Yām yām, whichever; *tanum*, form of a deity; *yaḥ*, any covetous person —among these people with desires; who, being endowed *śraddhayā*, with faith; and being a *bhaktaḥ*, devotee; *icchati*, wants; *arcitum*, to worship; *tām eva*, that very; *acalām*, firm, steady; *śraddhām*, faith; *tasya*, of his, of that particular covetous person—that very faith with which he desires to worship whatever form of a deity, in which (worship) he was earlier engaged under the impulsion of his own nature—; (105) *vidadhāmi*, I strengthen.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते।
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान्॥२२॥

22. Being imbued with that faith, that person engages in worshipping that form, and he gets those very desired results therefrom as they are dispensed by Me alone.

Yuktaḥ, being endued; *tayā*, with that; *śraddhayā*, faith, as granted by Me; *saḥ*, that person; *īhate*, engages in; *rādhanam*, that is *ārādhanam*, worshipping; *tasyāḥ*, that form of the deity. And *labhate*, he gets; *tān hi*, those very; *kāmān*, desired results; *tataḥ*, therefrom, from that form of the deity which was worshipped; as *vihitān*, they are dispensed, meted out; *mayā eva*, by Me alone, who am the omniscient, supreme God, because I am possessed of the knowledge of the apportionment of the results of actions. The meaning is that he surely gets those desired results since they are ordained by God.

If the reading be *hitān* (instead of *hi tān*), then the beneficence (—*hita* means beneficent—) of the desired result should be interpreted in a

figurative sense, for desires cannot be beneficial to anyone!

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम्।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि॥२३॥

23. That result of theirs who are of poor intellect is indeed limited. The worshippers of gods go to the gods. My devotees go to Me alone.

Since those non-discriminating men with desires are engaged in disciplines for limited results, therefore, *tat phalam*, that result; *teṣām*, of theirs; *alpamedhasām*, who are of poor intellect, of poor wisdom; *antavat tu bhavati*, is limited, ephemeral, indeed. *Deva-yajaḥ*, the worshippers of gods; *yānti*, go; *devān*, to the gods. *Madbhaktāḥ*, My devotees; *yānti*, to; *mām api*, to Me alone.

'Thus, though the effort needed is the same, they do not resort to me alone for the unlimited result. Alas! they are surely in a pitiable condition.' In this manner the Lord expresses his compassion.

'Why do they not take refuge in Me alone?'

The answer is:

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम्॥२४॥

24. The unintelligent, unaware of My supreme state which is immutable and unsurpassable, think of Me as the unmanifest that has become manifest.

Abuddhayaḥ, the unintelligent, the non-discriminating ones; *ajānantaḥ*, unaware; *mama*, of My; *param*, supreme; *bhāvam*, state, My reality as the supreme Self; which is *avyayam*, immutable, undecaying; and *anuttamam*, unsurpassable; *manyante*, think; *mām*, of Me; as *avyaktam*, the unmanifest, the invisible; *āpannam*, that has become; *vyaktim*, manifest, visible, at present (106)—though I am the ever well-known God. They think so because they are unaware of My reality. This is the idea.

What is the reason for their ignorance? This is being stated:

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम्॥२५॥

25. Being enveloped by *yoga-māyā*, I do not become manifest to all. This deluded world does not know Me who am birthless and undecaying.

Yoga-māyā-samāvṛtah, being enveloped by *yoga-māyā*—Yoga means the combination, the coming together, of the (three) *guṇas*; that (combination) is itself *māyā*, *yoga-māyā*; being enveloped, that is veiled, by that *yoga-māyā*; *aham*, I; *na prakāśaḥ*, do not become manifest; *sarvasya*, to all, to the world. The idea is that I become manifest only to some devotees of Mine. For this very reason, *ayam*, this; *mūḍhaḥ*, deluded; *lokaḥ*, world; *na abhijānāti*, does not know; *mām*, Me; who am *ajam*, birthless; and *avyayam*, undecaying. (107)

'That *yoga-māyā*, because of My being covered by which the world does not know Me—that *yoga-māyā*, since it belongs to Me, does not obstruct the knowledge of Me who am God, the possessor of *māyā*, just as the magic of any other magician does not cover his knowledge.' Since this is so, therefore—

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन॥२६॥

26. O Arjuna, I know the past and the present as also the future beings; but no one knows Me!

O Arjuna, *aham*, I, however; *veda*, know; *samatītāni*, the past beings; and *vartamānāni*, the present. I know *ca*, also; *bhaviṣyāṇi*, the future; *bhūtāni*, beings. *Tu*, but; *na kaścana*, no one; *veda*, knows; *mām*, Me. Except the one person who is My devotee and has taken refuge in Me, no one adores Me, just because he does not know My reality.

'What, again, is the obstruction to knowing Your reality, being prevented by which the creatures that are born do not know You?' In anticipation of such a question, the Lord says this:

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप॥२७॥

27. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, O destroyer of foes, due to the delusion of duality arising from likes and dislikes, all creatures become

bewildered at the time of their birth.

Icchā-dveṣa-samutthena, by what arises from likes and dislikes: *icchā*, likes, and *dveṣa*, dislikes, are *icchā-dveṣau*; anything arising from them is *icchā-dveṣa-samutthaḥ*. (Creatures are deluded) by that. By what? When that is thus sought to be known in particular, the Lord answers: *dvandva-mohena*, by the delusion of duality. Delusion (*moha*) that originates from duality (*dvandva*) is *dvandva-moha*. Those very likes and dislikes, which are mutually opposed like heat and cold, which relate to happiness and sorrow and their causes, and which come into association with all beings in due course, are termed as duality (and this deludes all creatures).

As regards them, when likes and dislikes arise from the experience of happiness, sorrow and their causes, then, by bringing the wisdom of all beings under their control, they create bewilderment which is the cause of the impediment to the rise of knowledge about the reality of Self, the supreme Truth. Indeed, exact knowledge about objects even in the external world does not arise in one whose mind is overpowered by the defects, namely likes and dislikes. It goes without saying that knowledge of the indwelling Self, beset with many obstacles as it is, does not arise in a completely bewildered person whose intelligence has been overcome by them.

Therefore, *bhārata*, O scion of the Bharata dynasty; owing to that delusion of duality arising from likes and dislikes, *sarvabhūtāni*, all creatures become deluded. *Parantapa*, O destroyer of foes; they *yānti sammoham*, become bewildered, come under delusion; *sarge*, at the time of their birth, that is at the time of their origination. The idea is that all creatures that come into being do so prepossessed by delusion. ‘Since this is so, therefore all creatures, being deluded and having their wisdom obstructed by that delusion of duality, do not know Me who am their Self. Hence, they do not adore Me as their Self.’

‘Who, again, are those that, becoming free from the delusion of duality, come to know You, and adore You as the Self in accordance with the scriptures?’

In order to elaborate the subject enquired about, it is being said:

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम्।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रता:॥२८॥

28. On the other hand, those persons who are of virtuous deeds, whose sin has come to an end, they, being free from the delusion of duality and firm in their convictions, adore Me.

Yeṣām janānām, those persons; *tu*, on the other hand; *puṇya-karmaṇām*, who are of virtuous deeds, in whom exist virtuous deeds that are the cause of purification of the mind; whose *pāpam*, sin; *antagatam*, has come to an end, is almost eradicated, attenuated; *te*, they; *dvandva-moha-nirmuktāḥ*, being free from the delusion of duality as described; and *dṛḍhavratāḥ*, firm in their convictions—those who (108) have the firm knowledge that the supreme Reality is such alone and not otherwise are called *dṛḍhavratāḥ*—; *bhajante*, adore; *mām*, Me, the supreme Self.

Why do they worship? This is being answered:

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदु: कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम्॥२९॥

29. Those who strive by resorting to Me for becoming free from old age and death, they know that Brahman, everything about the individual Self, and all about actions. (109)

Ye, those who; *yatanti*, strive; *āśritya*, by resorting; *mām*, to Me, the supreme God, by having their minds absorbed in Me; *jara-maraṇa-mokṣāya*, for becoming free from old age and death; *te*, they; *viduḥ*, know; *tat*, that; *brahma*, Brahman, which is the Supreme; they know *kṛtsnam*, everything; about *adhyātmam*, the individual Self, that indwelling entity; *ca*, and; they know *akhilam*, all; about *karma*, actions.

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदु:।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतस:॥३०॥

30. Those who know me as existing in the physical and the divine planes, and also in the context of the sacrifice, they of concentrated minds know Me even at the time of death.

Ye, those who; *viduḥ*, know; *mām*, Me; *sa-adhi-bhūta-adhidaivam*, as existing in the physical and the divine planes; *ca*, and also; *sa-adhiyajñam*, as existing in the context of the sacrifice; *te*, they; *yukta-cetasaḥ*, of concentrated minds—those who have their minds absorbed in God; *viduḥ*, know; *mām*, Me; *api ca*, even; *prayāṇakāle*, at the time of death. (110)

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[90] The main themes in the first six chapters are renunciation of actions as the means to attaining Knowledge, and the ascertainment of the word 'Thou' (in 'Thou art That'). The next six chapters are devoted to the adoration of the Lord and the ascertainment of the meaning of the word 'That'.

[91] *Strength*—physical; *power*—mental; *etc*. refers to omniscience and will.

[92] From the statement, '*jñāsyasi*, you will know', in the earlier verse, one may conclude that the Lord is speaking of indirect or theoretical knowledge. The word '*idam*, this' rules out such a conclusion; and it has also been said that this Knowledge is '*savijñānam*, combined with direct experience, realization'; it is Consciousness.

[93] *For perfection*: for the rise of Knowledge through the purification of the mind.

[94] Prakṛti here does not mean the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhyas.

[95] *Mahat* means Hiraṇyagarbha, or Cosmic Intelligence.

[96] *Associated*, that is of the nature of.

[97] Like cloth formed by threads constituting its warp and woof.

[98] For *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* see note under 2.45 as also Chapters 14, 17 and 18.—Tr.

[99] See note on p.22.—Tr.

[100] See note on p.48.—Tr.

[101] 'One who, being in distress and seeking to be saved from it, takes refuge (in Me).'

[102] That is one who, already having intellectual knowledge, aspires for Liberation.

[103] Aṣṭ. omits this word.—Tr.

[104] Here Aṣṭ. adds the word Nārāyaṇa.—Tr.

[105] Aṣṭ. takes the portion '*svabhāvataḥ yo yām devatā-tanum śraddhayā arcitum icchati*' with the next verse.—Tr.

[106] *At present*, after being embodied as an Incarnation.

[107] In verse 13 the reason for the non-realization of the supreme, unqualified Brahman was stated. The present verse states the reason for the non-realization of the qualified Brahman.

[108] Here Aṣṭ. adds, '*sarva-parityāga-vratena*, through the vow of relinquishing everything'.—Tr.

[109] They know Brahman as being all the individual entities and all actions. This verse prescribes meditation on the qualified Brahman for aspirants of the middle class. Verses beginning with the 14th speak about the realization of the unqualified Brahman by aspirants of the highest class.

[110] For those who are devoted to God, there is not only the knowledge of Brahman as identified with all individuals and all actions (see previous verse), but also the knowledge of It as existing in all things on the physical, the divine and the sacrificial planes. Those who realize Brahman as existing in the context of all the five, namely of the individual, of actions, of the physical, of the divine, and of the sacrifices—for them with such a realization there is no forgetting, loss of awareness, of Brahman even at the critical moment of death.

CHAPTER 8

DISCOURSE ON THE IMMUTABLE BRAHMAN

In the text, '…they know that Brahman, everything (about the individual Self)' (7.29) etc., the Lord has created scope for Arjuna's questions. Consequently, by way of raising those questions—

Arjuna said:

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते॥१॥

अधियज्ञ: कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन् मधुसूदन।
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभि:॥२॥

1. O supreme person, what is that Brahman? What is that which exists in the individual plane? What is action? And what is that which is said to exist in the physical plane? What is that which is said to be existing in the divine plane?

2. O Madhusūdana, how, and who, is the entity existing in the sacrifice here in this body? And at the time of death, how are You to be known by people of concentrated minds?

In order to settle these questions seriatim—

The Blessed Lord said—

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्ग: कर्मसंज्ञित:॥३॥

3. The Immutable is the supreme Brahman; self-hood is said to be the entity present in the individual plane. By action is meant the offerings which bring about the origin of the existence of things.

Akṣaram means that which does not perish (*na kṣarati*), the supreme Self. This agrees with the Upaniṣadic text, 'Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī...' (Bṛ. 3.8.9). And (the letter) *Om* is not accept here

[as the meaning of *akṣara* (lit. letter)], because of its being mentioned (as a *letter*) later on in, ‘The single letter *Om*, which is Brahman’ (13). Besides, the adjective ‘supreme’ is more appropriate with regard to the absolute, immutable Brahman.

By *svabhāva*, self-hood, is meant the existence of that very supreme Brahman in every body as the indwelling Self. *Svabhāvaḥ ucyate*, self-hood is said to be, is referred to by the word; *adhyātmam*, the entity which, as the indwelling Self, exists in the body (*ātmā*) by making it its habitat (*adhikṛtya*), and which in the ultimate analysis is the supreme Brahman.

Visargaḥ, the offerings, the giving away to gods of things like porridge, (111) cake, etc.; *bhūta-bhāva-udbhava-karaḥ*, which bring about the origin of the existence of things; is *karma-sanjñitaḥ*, meant by *action*. This sacrifice consisting in pouring of oblations is called action. The existence (*bhāva*) of (moving and non-moving) things (*bhūta*) is *bhūta-bhāva*. The coming into being (*udbhava*) of that (existence) is *bhūta-bhāva-udbhavaḥ*. That which causes (*karoti*) this is *bhūta-bhāva-udbhava-karaḥ*, that is the originator of existing things. It is indeed from this source that all beings, moving and non-moving, originate through the successive processes of rainfall etc. (see 3.14-15).

अधिभूतं क्षरो भाव: पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर॥४॥

4. The which exists in the physical plane is the mutable entity, and what exists in the divine plane is the Person. O best among the embodied beings, I Myself am the entity that exists in the sacrifice in this body.

Adhibhūtam, that which exists in the physical plane, i.e. that which exists by comprising all creatures;—what is it?—it consists of the *kṣaraḥ bhāvaḥ*, mutable entity. *Kṣaraḥ* is that which is mutable, which is destructible; *bhāvaḥ* means anything whatsoever that has origination. This is meaning.

Puruṣaḥ means the Person, derived in the sense of he by whom all things are pervaded; or, he who lies in every heart. He is Hiraṇyagarbha, who resides in the Sun and sustains the organs of all creatures. He is *adhi-daivatam*, the entity existing in the divine plane.

Deha-bhṛtām-vara, O best among the embodied beings; *adhiyajñaḥ*, the entity existing in sacrifices, is the Deity, called Viṣṇu, presiding over all sacrifices—which agrees with the Vedic text, 'Sacrifice is indeed Viṣṇu' (Tai, Saṁ. 1.7.4). *Aham eva*, I Myself, who am that very Viṣṇu; am *adhiyajñaḥ*, the entity existing in the sacrifice; which is going on *atra dehe*, in this body. Since a sacrifice is performed with body, therefore it is closely associated with the body. In this sense it is said to be going on in the body.

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम्।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः॥५॥

5. And at the time of death, anyone who departs by giving up the body while thinking of Me alone, he attains My state. There is no doubt about this.

Ca, and; *anta-kāle*, at the time of death; *yaḥ*, anyone who; *prayāti*, departs; *muktvā*, by giving up; the *kalevaram*, body; *smaran*, while thinking; *mām eva*, of Me alone, who am the supreme Lord Viṣṇu; *saḥ*, he; *yāti*, attains; *madbhāvam*, My state, the Reality that is Viṣṇu. *Asti*, there is; *na*, no; *saṁśayaḥ*, doubt; *atra*, about this, in this regard, as to whether he attains (Me) or not.

'This rule does not apply in relation to me alone.' 'What then?'

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः॥६॥

6. O son of Kuntī, thinking of any entity whichever it may be one gives up the body at the end, he attains that very one, having been always engrossed in its thought.

O Son of Kuntī, *smaran*, thinking of; *bhāvam*, any entity, any particular deity; *yam yam vā api*, whichever it may be; *tyajati*, one gives up; the *kalevaram*, body; *ante*, at the end, at the time of the departure of life; *eti*, he attains; *tam tam eva*, that very one, that very entity which is remembered—none else; having been *sadā*, always; *tadbhāva-bhāvitaḥ*, engrossed in its thought. Engrossment in it is *tad-bhāvaḥ*; one by whom that is remembered as a matter of habitual recollection is *tadbhāva-bhāvitaḥ*.

Since the last thought is thus the cause of acquiring the next body—

तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयः॥७॥

7. Therefore, think of Me at all times and fight. There is no doubt that by dedicating your mind and intellect to Me, you will attain Me alone.

Tasmāt, therefore; *anusmara*, think of; *mām*, Me, in the way prescribed by the scriptures; *sarveṣu kāleṣu*, at all times; and *yudhya*, fight, engage yourself in war, which is your own (caste) duty. *Asaṁśayaḥ*, there is no doubt in this matter; that *arpita-mano-buddhiḥ*, by dedicating your mind and intellect; *mayi*, to Me; *eṣyasi*, you—you who have thus dedicated your mind and intellect to Me, Vāsudeva—will attain; *mām eva*, Me alone, as I shall be remembered. (112)

Besides,

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन्॥८॥

8. O son of Pṛthā, by meditating with a mind which is engaged in the yoga of practice and which does not stray away to anything else, one reaches the supreme Person existing in the effulgent region.

Pārtha, O son of Pṛthā; *anu-cintayan*, by meditating, that is contemplating in accordance with (*anu*) the instruction of teachers and scriptures; *cestasā*, with a mind; *abhyāsa-yogayuktena*, engaged in the yoga of practice—*abhyāsa*, practice, consists in the repetition of the same kind of thought, uninterrupted by any contrary idea, with regard to Me who am the object of concentration of the mind; that practice itself is yoga; the mind of a yogī is engrossed (*yuktam*) in that itself; with a mind that is such, and *na anya-gāminā*, which does not stray away to anything else which is not inclined to go away to any other object; *yāti*, one reaches; the *paramam*, supreme, unsurpassed; *puruṣam*, Person; *divyam*, existing in the effulgent region (*divi*), in the Solar Orb.

And, to what kind of a Person does he go? This is being stated:

कविं पुराणमनुशासितार-

मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्य: ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप-
मादित्यवर्णं तमस: परस्तात्॥९॥

9. He who meditates on the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler, subtler than the subtle, the Ordainer of everything, of inconceivable form, effulgent like the sun, and beyond darkness—(he attains the supreme Person).

Yaḥ, he who, anyone who; *anusmaret*, meditates on; *kavim*, the Omniscient, the Knower of things past, present and future; *purāṇam*, the Ancient, the Eternal; *anuśāsitāram*, the Ruler, the Lord of the whole Universe; *aṇīyāṁsam*, subtler; *aṇoḥ*, than the subtle; *dhātāram*, the Ordainer; *sarvasya*, of everything—one who grants the fruits of actions, in all their varieties, individually to all creatures; *acintya-rūpam*, who is of inconceivable form—His form, though always existing, defies being conceived of by anybody; *āditya-varnam*, who is effulgent like the sun, who is manifest as eternal Consciousness like the effulgence of the sun; and *parastāt*, beyond; *tamasaḥ*, darkness—beyond the darkness of delusion in the form of ignorance—(he attains the supreme Person). This verse is to be connected with the earlier itself thus: 'by meditating (on Him) ... he attains Him.'

Further,

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन
भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्
स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्॥१०॥

10. At the time of death, having fully fixed the Praṇa (vital force) between the eyebrows with an unswerving mind, and being imbued with devotion as also the strength of concentration, he reaches that resplendent supreme Person.

Prayāṇa-kāle, at the time of death; after first bringing the mind under control in the lotus of the heart, and then lifting up the vital force—through the nerve going upward—by gradually gaining control over (the rudiments

of nature such as) earth etc. (113) and after that, *samyak āveśya*, having fully fixed; *prāṇam*, the Prāṇa (vital force); *madhye*, between; the *bhruvoḥ*, eye-brows, without losing attention; *acalena manasā*, with an unwavering mind; he, the yogī possessed of such wisdom, *yuktaḥ*, imbued; *bhaktyā*, with devotion, deep love; *ca eva*, as also; *yoga-balena*, (114) with the strength of concentration—i.e. imbued with that (strength) also, consisting in steadfastness of the mind arising from accumulation of impressions resulting from spiritual absorption; *upaiti*, reaches; *tam*, that; *divyam*, resplendent; *param*, supreme; *puruṣam*, Person, described as 'the Omniscient, the Ancient,' etc.

The Lord again speaks of Brahman which is sought to be attained by the process going to be stated, and which is described through such characteristics as, 'what is declared by the knowers of the Vedas,' etc.:

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति
विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति
तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये॥११॥

11. I shall speak to you briefly of that immutable Goal which the knowers of the Vedas declare, into which enter the diligent ones free from attachment, and aspiring for which people practise celibacy.

Pravakṣye, I shall speak; *te*, to you; *saṁgraheṇa*, briefly; *tat*, of that; which is called the *akṣaram*, immutable—that which does not get exhausted, which is indestructible; *padam*, Goal to be reached; *yat*, which; *veda-vidaḥ*, the knowers of the Vedas, the knowers of the purport of the Vedas; *vadanti*, declare, speak of It as opposed to all qualifications—'It is neither gross nor minute' (Bṛ. 3.8.8) etc.—, in accordance with the Upaniṣadic text, 'O Gārgī, the knowers of Brahman say this Immutable (Brahman) is that' (ibid); and further, *yat*, into which, after the attainment of complete realization; *viśanti*, enter; *yatayaḥ*, the diligent ones, the monks; who have become *vīta-rāgāḥ*, free from attachment; and *icchantaḥ*, aspiring to know (—*to know* being supplied to complete the sense—); *yat*, which Immutable; people *caranti*, practise; *brahmacaryam*, celibacy—at the teacher's house.

Commencing with, '"O venerable sir, which world does he really win thereby who, among men, intently meditates on *Om* in that wonderful way till death?" To him he said, "O Satyakāma, this very Brahman that is (known as) the inferior and superior is but this *Om*"' (Pr.5.1–2), it has been stated, 'Again, anyone who meditates on the supreme Puruṣa with the help of this very syllable *Om*, as possessed of three letters, ... he is lifted up to the world of Brahmā (Hiraṇyagarbha) by the Sāma-*mantras*,' (op.cit.5) etc. Again, beginning with '(Tell me of that thing which you see as) different from virtue, different from vice,' it has been stated, 'I tell you briefly of that goal which all the Vedas with one voice propound, which all the austerities speak of, and wishing for which people practise Brahmacarya: it is this, namely *Om*' (Ka.1.2.14–15), etc.

In the above quotations, *Om* which is going to be spoken of is presented as a name of this supreme Brahman, and also as Its symbol like an image. This has been done as a means to meditation on it (*Om*) for the attainment of the supreme Brahman by people of low and mediocre intellect, in as much as this leads to Liberation in course of time. Here also that very meditation on *Om* in the manner stated above—which is the means of attaining the supreme Brahman introduced in, '(He who meditates on) the Omniscient, the Ancient,' and in, '(I shall speak to you briefly of that immutable Goal) which the knowers of the Vedas declare,' and which, (meditation) leads to Liberation in due course (115)—has to be spoken of along with 'adherence to yoga' as also whatever is connected directly or indirectly with it. For this purpose the following text is begun:

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च।
मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम्॥१२॥

12. Having controlled all the passages, having confined the mind in the heart, and having fixed his own vital force in the head, (and then) continuing in the firmness in yoga;

Saṁyamya, having controlled; *sarva-dvārāṇi*, all the passages, the doors of perception; *niruddhya*, having confined; the *manaḥ*, mind; *hṛdi*, in the heart—not allowing it to spread out; and after that, with the help of the mind controlled therein, rising up through the nerve running upward from

the heart, *ādhāya*, having fixed; *ātmanaḥ*, his own; *prāṇam*, vital force; *mūrdhni*, in the head; (and then) *āsthitaḥ*, continuing in; *yogadhāraṇām*, the firmness in yoga—in order to make it steady—.

And while fixing it there itself,

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥१३॥

13. He who departs by leaving the body while uttering the single syllable, namely *Om*, which is Brahman, and thinking of Me, he attains the supreme Goal.

Yaḥ, he who; *prayāti*, departs, dies; *tyajan*, by leaving; *deham*, the body—the phrase 'leaving the body' is meant for qualifying departure; thereby it is implied that the soul's departure occurs by abandoning the body, and not through the destruction of its own reality, having abandoned thus—; *vyāharan*, while uttering; the *eka-akṣaram*, single syllable; *om iti brahma*, namely *Om*, which is Brahman, *Om* which is the name of Brahman; and *anusmaran*, thinking; *mām*, of Me, of God who is implied by that (syllable); *saḥ*, he; *yāti*, attains; the *paramām*, supreme, best; *gatim*, Goal.

Further,

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥१४॥

14. O son of Pṛthā, to that yogī of constant concentration and single-minded attention, who remembers Me uninterruptedly and for long, I am easy of attainment.

Pārtha, O son of Pṛthā, *tasya yogīnaḥ*, to that yogī; *nitya-yuktasya*, of constant concentration, who is ever absorbed (in God); and *ananya-cetāḥ*, of single-minded attention, a yogī whose mind is not drawn to any other object; *yaḥ*, who; *smarati*, remembers; *mām*, Me, the supreme God; *satatam*, uninterruptedly; and *nityaśaḥ*, for long—.

By *satatam*, uninterruptedly, is meant 'without any break'. By *nityaśaḥ*, is meant long duration. Not six months, nor even a year! What then? The meaning is: He who remembers Me for his whole life, continuously.

To that yogī *aham*, I; am *sulabhaḥ*, easy of attainment. Since this is so, therefore one should remain ever absorbed in Me, with mind given to nothing else.

'What follows from Your being easy of attainment?' This is being answered: 'Hear what follows from My being easy of attainment.'

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५ ॥

15. As a result of reaching Me, the exalted ones who have attained the highest perfection do not get rebirth which is an abode of sorrows and which is impermanent.

Upetya mām, as a result of reaching Me who am God—as a result of realizing My nature; *mahātmānaḥ*, the exalted ones, the monks; *gatāḥ*, who have attained; the *paramām*, highest; *saṁsiddhim*, perfection, called Liberation; *na*, do not; *āpnuvanti*, get; this kind of *punarjanma*, rebirth. As to what kind of rebirth they do not get, the Lord states its characteristics—*duḥkhālayam*, which is an abode of sorrows, a resort of physical and other sorrows, that is a birth to which sorrows adhere. It is not merely an abode of sorrows, but also *aśāśvatam*, impermanent, having no fixity of nature.

On the other hand, those who do not reach Me, they come again.

Again, 'Is it that those who attain someone other than You return?' This is being answered:

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ १६ ॥

16. O Arjuna, all the worlds together with the world of Brahmā are subject to return. But, O son of Kuntī, there is no rebirth after reaching Me.

O Arjuna, all the *lokāḥ*, worlds; *ābrahma-bhuvanāt*, together with the world of Brahmā—*bhuvana* is that (place) in which creatures are born, and *brahma-bhuvana* means the world of Brahmā; *punaḥ āvartinaḥ*, are subject to return, are by nature liable to come again; *Tu*, but; *kaunteya*, O son of Kuntī, *na vidyate*, there is no; *punarjanma*, rebirth; *upetya*, after reaching; *mām*, Me alone.

Why are all the worlds together with the realm of Brahmā subject to return? Because they are limited by time. How?

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः॥१७॥

17. Those people who are knowers of what day and night are, know the day of Brahmā which ends in a thousand *yugas*, (116) and His night which ends in a thousand *yugas*.

Viduḥ, they know; that *ahaḥ*, day; *brahmaṇaḥ*, of Brahmā, of Prajāpati, of Virāṭ; *yat*, which; *sahasra-yuga-paryantam*, ends in a thousand *yugas*; and also the *rātrim*, night; *yuga-sahasra-antām*, which ends in a thousand *yugas*, having the same duration as the day. Who knows (these)? In reply the Lord says: *Te*, they; *janāḥ*, people; *ahorātra-vidaḥ*, who are the knowers of what day and night are, that is the people who know the measurement of time. Since the worlds are thus delimited by time, therefore they are subject to return.

What happens during the day and the night of Prajāpati is being stated:

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके॥१८॥

18. With the coming of day all manifested things emerge from the Unmanifest and when night comes they merge in that itself which is called the Unmanifested.

Ahar-āgame, with the coming of day, at the time when Brahmā wakes; *sarvāḥ vyaktayaḥ*, all manifested things, all things that get manifested, all creatures characterized as moving and non-moving; *prabhavanti*, emerge, become manifested; *avyaktāt*, from the Unmanifested—*avyakta* (Unmanifested) is the state of sleep of Prajāpati; from that *avyakta*. Similarly, *rātri-āgame*, when night comes, at the time when Brahmā sleeps; *pralīyante*, they, all the manifested things, merge; *tatra eva*, in that itself; *avyakta-sanjñake*, which is called the Unmanifested referred to above.

In order to obviate the defect of the emergence of some unmerited result and the destruction of merited results; (117) for pointing out the

meaningfulness of the scriptures (118) dealing with bondage and Liberation; and with a view to propounding detachment from the world on the ground that the helpless multitude of beings perishes after being born again and again under the influence of accumulated results of actions that have for their origin such evils as ignorance etc., (119) the Lord says this:

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे॥१९॥

19. O son of Pṛthā, after being born again and again, that very multitude of beings disappears in spite of itself at the approach of night. It comes to life at the approach of day.

O son of Pṛthā, *bhūtvā bhūtvā*, after being born again and again at the approach of day; *saḥ eva*, that very—not any other; *bhūtagrāmaḥ*, multitude of beings, consisting of the moving and the non-moving objects that existed in the earlier cycle of creation; *pralīyate*, disappears repeatedly; *avaśaḥ*, in spite of itself, (120) without any independence whatever; *rātri-āgame*, at the approach of night, at the close of the day. *Prabhavati*, it comes to life, verily in spite of itself; *ahar-āgame*, at the approach of day.

The means for the attainment of that Immutable which was introduced has been pointed out in, 'He who departs by leaving the body while uttering the single syllable, namely *Om*, which is Brahman,' etc. (13). Now, with a view to indicating the real nature of that very Immutable, this is being said —that It is to be reached through this path of yoga:

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति॥२०॥

20. But distinct from that Unmanifested is the other eternal unmanifest Reality, who does not get destroyed when all beings get destroyed.

He is *paraḥ*, distinct, different;—from what?—*tasmāt*, from that aforesaid (Unmanifested).

The word *tu*, but, is meant for showing the distinction of the Immutable that is going to be spoken of from the Unmanifested.

He is *bhāvaḥ*, the Reality, the supreme Brahman called the Immutable.

Even though different, there is the possibility of similarity of characteristics. Hence, for obviating this the Lord says: *anyaḥ*, the other, of a different characteristic, and He is the Immutable which is beyond the range of the organs. It has been said that He is distinct from that. From what, again, is He distinct? *Avyaktāt*, from the Unmanifested spoken of earlier, which is the seed of the multitude of beings, and which is characterized as ignorance (*avidyā*). (121) He is *sanatanaḥ*, eternal.

Bhāvaḥ, the Reality; *yaḥ saḥ*, who is such; *na*, does not; *vinaśyati*, get destroyed; when *sarveṣu bhūteṣu*, all beings, beginning from Brahmā; *naśyatsu*, get destroyed.

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहु: परमां गतिम्।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम॥२१॥

21. He who has been mentioned as the Unmanifested, the Immutable, they call Him the supreme Goal. That is the supreme abode of Mine, reaching which they do not return.

He Himself who has been *uktaḥ*, mentioned; as *avyaktaḥ*, Unmanifest; the *akṣarah*, Immutable; *āhuḥ*, they call; *tam*, Him—that very unmanifest Reality which is termed as the Immutable; the *paramām*, supreme; *gatim*, Goal. *Tat*, That; is the *paramam*, supreme; *dhāma*, abode, that is the supreme State; *mama*, of Mine, of Viṣṇu; *yam prāpya*, reaching which Reality; *na nivartante*, they do not return to the worldly state.

The means for gaining That is being stated:

पुरुष: स पर: पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया।
यस्यान्त:स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम्॥२२॥

22. O son of Pṛthā, that supreme Person—in whom are included (all) the beings and by whom all this is pervaded—is, indeed, reached through one-pointed devotion.

O son of Pṛthā, *saḥ*, that; *paraḥ puruṣaḥ*, supreme, unsurpassable Person—(the word *puruṣa*) derived in the sense of ‘residing in the heart’ or ‘all-pervasiveness’; that Person, compared to whom there is nothing superior—; *yasya*, in whom, in which Person; *antaḥsthāni*, are included;

bhūtāni, (all) the beings which are Its products—for a product remains inherent in its cause; and *yena*, by whom, by which Person; *tatam*, is pervaded; *sarvam*, all; *idam*, this, the Universe, as pot etc. are by space; is *tu*, indeed; *labhyaḥ*, reached; through *ananyayā*, one-pointed; *bhaktyā*, through devotion, characterized as Knowledge; *ananyayā*, which is one pointed, which relates to the Self.

The Northern Path meant for the attainment of Brahman by the yogīs under discussion, who have superimposed the idea of Brahman on the syllable *Om* and who are destined to get Liberation in due course, has to be stated. Hence, in order to present the intended idea the verse, '(O best of the Bharata dynasty) of that time ... at which,' etc. is being recited. The description of the Path of Return (in verse 25) is by way of praising the other Path (of Departure, in verse 24):

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ॥२३॥

23. O best of the Bharata dynasty, I shall now speak of that time by departing at which the yogīs attain the State of Non-return, and also (of the time by departing at which they attain) the State of Return.

Bharatarṣabha, O best of the Bharata dynasty; *vakṣyāmi*, I shall speak; *tu*, now; *tam*, of that; *kālam*, time; *prayātāh*, by departing, by dying; (—these words are to be connected with the remote words) *yatra kāle*, at which time; *yoginaḥ*, the yogīs; *yānti*, attain; *anāvṛttim*, the State of Non-return, of non-rebirth; *ca eva*, and also; of the time by departing at which they attain its opposite, *āvṛttim*, the State of Return.

By 'yogīs' are implied both the yogīs (men of meditation) and the men of actions (rites and duties). But the men of action are yogīs by courtesy, in accordance with the description, 'through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3).

The Lord speaks of that time: (122)

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम्।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः॥२४॥

24. Fire, light, daytime, the bright fortnight, the six months of the Northern solstice—by following this Path, persons who are knowers of Brahman attain Brahman when they die.

Agniḥ, fire—is a deity presiding over a period of time; similarly, *jyotiḥ*, light—also is a deity presiding over a period of time. Or fire and light are the well-known Vedic deities.

As the expression 'mango grove' is used with regard to a place where mango trees are more numerous, similarly, the expressions 'at which time' and 'that time' (in the earlier verse) are used in view of the predominance (of the deities presiding over time). (123)

So also, *ahaḥ*, daytime, means the deity of daytime. *Śuklaḥ*, the bright fortnight, implies the deity presiding over the bright fortnight. *Ṣaṇmāsāḥ uttarāyaṇam*, the six months of the Northern solstice—here, too, is understood the deity presiding over the Path. This is the principle (of interpretation) followed elsewhere (in the Upaniṣads also).

Tatra, following this Path; *janāḥ*, persons; who are *brahma-vidaḥ*, knowers of Brahman, those engaged in meditation on (the qualified) Brahman; *gacchanti*, attain; *brahma*, Brahman; *prayātāḥ*, when they die. It is understood that they attain Brahman through stages. Indeed, according to the Upaniṣadic text, 'His vital forces do not depart' (Bṛ. 4.4.46), there is neither going nor coming back for those established in full realization, who are fit for immediate Liberation. Having their organs merged in Brahman, they are suffused with Brahman, they are verily identified with Brahman.

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम्।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते॥२५॥

25. Smoke, night, as also the dark fortnight and the six months of the Southern solstice—following this Path the yogī having reached the lunar light, returns.

Dhūmaḥ, smoke; and *rātriḥ* night, are the deities presiding over smoke and night. Similarly, *Kṛṣṇaḥ*, the dark fornight, means the deity of the dark fortnight. Just as before, by *ṣaṇmāsāḥ dakṣiṇāyanam* the six months of the Southern solstice, also is verily meant a deity. *Tatra*, following this

Path; *yogī*, the yogī who performs sacrifices etc., the man of actions; *prāpya*, having reached; *cāndramasam jyotiḥ*, the lunar light—having enjoyed the results (of his actions); *nivartate*, returns, on their exhaustion.

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः॥२६॥

26. These two courses of the world, which are white and black, are verily considered eternal. By the one a man goes to the State of Non-return; by the other he returns again.

Ete, these two; *gatī*, courses; *jagataḥ*, of the world; which are *śukla-kṛṣṇe*, white and black [124]—white because it is a revealer of Knowledge, and black because there is absence of that (revelation); are *hi*, verily; *mate*, considered; *śāśvate*, eternal, because the world is eternal. These two courses are possible for those who are qualified for Knowledge and for rites and duties; not for everybody. This being so, *ekayā*, by the one, by the white one; *yāti*, a man goes; *anāvṛttim*, to the State of Non-return; *anyayā*, by the other; *āvartate*, he returns; *punaḥ*, again.

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन॥२७॥

27. O son of Pṛthā, no yogī [125] whosoever has known these two courses becomes deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, be you steadfast in yoga at all times.

O son of Pṛthā, *na kaścana yogī*, no yogī whosoever; *jānan*, has known; *ete sṛtī*, these two courses as described—that one leads to worldly life, and the other to Liberation; *muhyati*, becomes deluded. *Tasmāt*, therefore; O Arjuna, *bhava*, be you; *yoga-yuktaḥ*, steadfast in Yoga; *sarveṣu kāleṣu*, at all times.

Hear about the greatness of that yoga:

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव
दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम्।

अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा

योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम्॥२८॥

28. Having known this, the yogī transcends all those results of righteous deeds that are declared with regard to the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and also charities, and he reaches the primordial supreme State.

Viditvā, having known; *idam*, this—having fully ascertained and practised what was spoken in the course of determining the answers to the seven questions (put by Arjuna in verse 1 and 2); the yogī *atyeti*, transcends, goes beyond; *tat sarvam*, all those; *puṇya-phalam*, results of righteous deeds, aggregate of rewards; *yat*, that are; *pradiṣṭam*, declared by the scriptures; with regard to these, namely *vedeṣu*, with regard to the Vedas which have been properly (126) studied; *yajñeṣu*, with regard to sacrifices performed together with their accessories; *tapaḥsu*, with regard to austerities practised correctly; (127) *ca eva*, and also; *dāneṣu*, with regard to charities rightly (128) given; and *upaiti*, he reaches; the *param*, supreme; *sthānam*, State of God; *ādyam*, which is primordial, the Cause that existed in the beginning, that is Brahman.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[111] *Caru*: An oblations of rice, barley and pulse boiled together to be offered to gods.

[112] When the Lord instructs Arjuna to think of Him, and at the same time engage in war, it may seem that He envisages a combination of Knowledge and action. But this is not so, because when one thinks of all actions, accessories and results that come within the purview of the mind and the intellect as Brahman, it is denied that actions etc. have any separate reality apart from Brahman. Therefore, no combination is involved here.

[113] Space, air, fire, water and earth.

[114] Yoga means spiritual absorption, the fixing of the mind on Reality alone, to the exclusion of any other object.

[115] Realization of Brahman leads to immediate Liberation (*sadyomukti*, whereas meditation (contemplation, *upāsanā*) leads to gradual Liberation (*krama-mukti*).—Tr.

[116] The four *yugas* (in the human worlds), namely Satya, Tretā, Dwāpara, and Kali are made up of 4,320,000 years. This period multiplied by a thousand constitutes one day of Brahmā. His night also extends over an equal period. See M.S. and V.S.A.

[117] The following verse says that the very same multitude of beings continues in the different cycles of creation, and therefore these two defects do not arise.

[118] For the earlier reason the scriptures do not lose their validity.

[119] The five evils are: ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion and clinging to life. (See P. Y. Sū. 2.3)

[120] For they are impelled by their own defects.

[121] Aṣṭ. adds, ‘*anyaḥ vilakṣaṇaḥ bhāvaḥ ityabhiprāyaḥ*: The meaning is that the Reality is different and distinct (from that Unmanifested).—Tr.

[122] This is Aṣṭ.’s reading.—Tr.

[123] If the first two (fire and light) are taken as Vedic deities, then the remaining three are the only deities of time. Still, the latter being numerically greater, all the five deities are referred to as deities of time. The deities of both the Paths—of gods and manes, or of the Northern and the Southern Paths as they are called—who are gods of time, are referred to here as ‘time’ by such words as day, fortnight, six months, etc.

[124] The Northern Path (the path of the Gods), and the Southern Path (the Path of the Manes) respectively.

[125] One steadfast in meditation.

[126]Sitting facing eastward after having washed one’s hands, face, etc.

[127] With concentrated mind, intellect, etc.

[128]Taking into consideration place, time and fitness of the recipient.

CHAPTER 9

THE SOVEREIGN KNOWLEDGE AND MYSTERY

The yoga associated with (its part) *dhāraṇa* (concentration) (practised) while proceeding through the (*suṣumṇā*) nerve has been dealt with in the eighth chapter, together with is subsidiary disciplines (see 8.12). And its result has been indicated as the State of Non-return, which in fact is the realization of Brahman Itself in due course of time by successively reaching fire, light, etc. In that connection, a doubt may arise that the result in the form of attainment of Liberation is achieved only through this process, and not through any other. For dispelling this—

The Blessed Lord said:

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्॥१॥

1. However, to you who are not given to cavilling I shall speak of this highest secret itself, which is Knowledge (129) combined with experience, by realizing which you shall be free from evil.

Te, to you; *anasūyave*, who are not given to cavilling, who are free from carping; *pravakṣyāmi*, I shall speak of; *idam*, this.

The Lord uttered the word 'this' by bearing in mind as an immediately present fact the knowledge of Brahman that will be and was spoken of in the earlier chapters. The word *tu* (however) is used for pointing out a distinction. (130)

(I shall speak) of this itself—what is that?—(it is) *guhyatamam*, the highest secret; and is *jñānam*, Knowledge, complete Knowledge—nothing else—, the direct means to Liberation, as stated in the Upaniṣads and the Smṛtis, 'Vāsudeva is all' (7.19), 'the Self verily is all this' (Ch. 7.25.2), 'One only, without a second' (op. cit. 6.2.1), etc., and also as stated in such Upaniṣadic texts as, 'On the other hand, those who understand otherwise than this come under a different ruler, and belong to the worlds that are subject to decay' (op. cit. 7.25.2). (Knowledge) of what kind? It is *vijñāna*-

sahitam, combined with experience; *jñātva*, by realizing, by attaining; *yat*, which Knowledge; *mokṣyase*, you shall be free; *aśubhāt*, from evil, from worldly bondage.

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम्।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम्॥२॥

2. This is the Sovereign Knowledge, the Sovereign Profundity, the best sanctifier; directly realizable, righteous, very easy to practise and imperishable.

And that is *rāja-vidyā*, the Sovereign Knowledge, the king among sciences because of the abundance of its radiance. Indeed, this knowledge of Brahman shines most brilliantly among all kinds of learning. (131) So also, *idam*, this; is *rāja-guhyam*, the Sovereign Profundity, the kind among profundities; *uttamam*, the best; *pavitram*, sanctifier. This knowledge of Brahman, which sanctifies all things that purify, is the greatest. Since it reduces to ashes in a moment (the results of) all actions—righteous, unrighteous and others—together with their roots, accumulated over many thousands of births, therefore, what to speak of its sanctifying power! Besides, it is *pratyakṣavagamam*, directly realizable, directly perceivable like happiness etc.

Even though possessed of many qualities, a thing may be noticed to be contrary to righteousness. The knowledge of the Self is not opposed to righteousness, in that way, but it is *dharmyam*, righteous, not divorced from righteousness. Even so, it may be difficult to practise. Hence the Lord says it is *susukham*, very easy; *kartum* to practise, like the knowledge of the distinction among jewels. It is seen (in the world) that, actions which require little effort and are accomplished easily yield meagre results, whereas those that are difficult to accomplish yield great results. Thus the contingency arises that this (knowledge of Brahman), however, which is easily attained, perishes when its result gets exhausted. Therefore the Lord says it is *avyayam*, imperishable. From the point of view of its result, it is not perishable like (the results of) actions. Hence the knowledge of the Self should be highly regarded.

अश्रद्दधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप।

अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि॥३॥

3. O destroyer of foes, persons who are regardless of this Dharma (knowledge of the Self) certainly go round and round, without reaching Me, along the path of transmigration which is fraught with death.

Parantapa, O destroyer of foes; those *puruṣāḥ*, persons, again; who are *aśraddadhānāḥ*, regardless of, devoid of faith in; *asya dharmasya*, this Dharma, this knowledge of the Self—those who are faithless as regards its true nature as well as its result, who are sinful, who have taken recourse to the '*upaniṣad*' (mystical teaching) of demoniacal people, consisting in consideration the body alone as the Self, and who delight in life (sense enjoyments); *nivartante*, certainly go round and round;—where?—*mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani*, along the path (*vartma*) of transmigration (*saṁsāra*) fraught with death (*mṛtyu*), the path leading to hell, birth as low creatures, etc., that is, they go round and round along that very path; *aprāpya*, without reaching; *mām*, Me, the supreme God. Certainly there is no question of their attaining Me. Hence, the implication is that (they go round and round) without even acquiring a little devotion, which is one of the disciplines (132) constituting the path for reaching Me.

Having drawn Arjuna's attention through the (above) eulogy, the Lord says:

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः॥४॥

4. This whole world is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest form. All beings exist in Me, but I am not contained in them!

Idam, this; *sarvam*, whole; *jagat*, world; is *tatam*, pervaded; *mayā*, by Me; through the supreme nature, that I have, *avyakta-mūrtinā*, in My unmanifest form, in that form in which My nature is not manifest, that is in My form which is beyond the range of the organs.

Sarva-bhūtāni, all beings, from Brahmā to a clump of grass; *matsthāni*, exist in Me, are established in Me in that unmanifest form. For, no created thing that is bereft of the Self (that is of Reality) can be conceived of as an object of practical use. Therefore, being possessed of their reality through

Me who am their Self, they exist in Me. Hence they are said to be established in Me.

I Myself am the Self of those created things. Consequently, it appears to people of little understanding that I dwell in them. Hence I say: *Na ca aham*, but I am not; *avasthitaḥ*, contained; *teṣu*, in them, in the created things. Since unlike gross objects I am not in contact with anything, therefore I am certainly the inmost core even of space. For, a thing that has no contact with anything cannot exist like something contained in a receptacle.

For this very reason that I am not in contact with anything—

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम्।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः॥५॥

5. Nor do the beings dwell in Me. Behold My divine Yoga! I am the sustainer and originator of beings, but My Self is not contained in the beings.

Na ca bhūtāni, nor do the beings, beginning from Brahmā; *matsthāni*, dwell in Me. *Paśya*, behold; *me*, My; *aiśvaram*, divine; *yogam*, Yoga, action, performance, that is this real nature of Myself. The Upaniṣadic text, too, similarly shows the absence of association (of the Self) due to Its being free from contact: '...unattached, for It is never attached' (Bṛ. 3.9.26).

Behold this other wonder: I am the *bhūta-bhṛt*, sustainer of beings, though I am unattached. *Ca*, but; *mama ātmā*, My Self; *na bhūtasthaḥ*, is not contained in the beings. As it has been explained according to the logic stated above, there is no possibility of Its remaining contained in beings. How, again, is it said, 'It is My Self'? Following human understanding, having separated the aggregate of body etc. (from the Self) and superimposing egoism on them, the Lord calls It '*My* Self'. But not that He has said so by ignorantly thinking like ordinary mortals that the Self is different from Himself.

So also, I am the *bhūta-bhāvanaḥ*, originator of beings, one who gives birth to or nourishes the beings.

By way of establishing with the help of an illustration the subject-matter (133) dealt with in the aforesaid two verses, the Lord says:

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान्।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय॥६॥

6. Understand thus that just as the voluminous wind moving everywhere is ever present in space, similarly all beings abide in Me.

Upadhāraya, understand; *iti*, thus; that *yathā*, just as; in the world, the *mahān*, voluminous—in dimension; *vāyuḥ*, wind; *sarvatragaḥ*, moving everywhere; is *nityam*, ever; (134) *ākāśa-sthitaḥ*, present in space; *tathā*, similarly; (*sarvāṇi*, all; *bhūtāni*, beings; *matsthāni*,) abide in Me who am omnipresent like space—abide certainly without any contact.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम्।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम्॥७॥

7. O son of Kuntī, all the beings go back at the end of a cycle to My Prakṛti. I project them forth again at the beginning of a cycle.

Kaunteya, O son of Kuntī; *sarva-bhūtāni*, all the beings—all the beings which, like wind abiding in space, abide thus in Me during their period of existence; *yānti*, go back; *kalpa-kṣaye*, at the end of a cycle, at the time of dissolution; *māmikām prakṛtim*, to My Prakṛti which consists of the three *guṇas* (qualities; see 7.13) and is (called My) lower Nature. *Punaḥ*, again; *aham*, I; *visṛjāmi*, project forth, create; *tāni*, the beings, as before; (135) *kalpādau*, at the beginning of a cycle, at the time of creation.

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात्॥८॥

8. Keeping My own Prakṛti under control, I project forth again and again the whole of this multitude of beings which are powerless owing to the influence of (their own) nature.

Thus *avaṣṭabhya*, keeping under control; *svām*, My own; *prakṛtim*, Prakṛti, which is characterized as nescience; *visṛjāmi*, I project forth; *punaḥ punaḥ*, again and again; the *kṛtsnam*, whole of; *imam*, this; existing

bhūta-grāmam, multitude of beings which are born of Prakṛti; which, being under another's subjugation due to such defects (136) as ignorance etc., are *avaśam*, powerless, not independent; *prakṛteḥ vaśāt*, under the influence of their own nature.

'In that case, You, who are the supreme God and who ordain this multitude of beings unequally, will become associated with virtue and vice as a result of that act?'

In answer the Lord says this:

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु॥९॥

9. O Dhanañjaya (Arjuna), nor do those actions bind Me, remaining (as I do) like one unconcerned with, and unattached to, those actions.

O Dhanañjaya,na ca, nor do; tāni, those; karmāṇi, actions—which are the sources of the creation of the multitude of beings unequally; nibadhnanti, bind; mām, Me, who am God. As to that, the Lord states the reason for His not becoming associated with the actions: Āsīnam, remaining (as I do); udāsīnavat, like one unconcerned, like some indifferent spectator—for the Self is not subject to any change; and asaktam, unattached; teṣu karmasu, to those actions—free from attachment to results, free from the egoism that 'I do'.

Hence, even in the case of any other person also, the absence of the idea of agentship and the absence of attachment to results are the causes of not getting bound. Otherwise, like the silkworm, a foolish man becomes bound by actions. This is the idea.

There (in the previous two verses) it involves a contradiction to say, 'Remaining like one unconcerned, I project forth this multitude of beings.' In order to dispel this doubt the Lord says:

मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम्।
हेतुनाऽनेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते॥१०॥

10. Under Me as the supervisor, the Prakṛti produces (the world) of the moving and the non-moving things. Owing to this reason, O son of Kuntī,

the world revolves.

Māyā, under Me; adhyakṣeṇa, as the supervisor, remaining changeless as a mere witness under all circumstances; prakṛtiḥ, the Prakṛti, My māyā consisting of the three guṇas and characterized as ignorance; sūyate, produces; the world sa-cara-acaram, of the moving and the non-moving things. Thus there is the Vedic text, 'The one divine Being is hidden in all beings; He is omnipresent, the indwelling Self of all beings, the Supervisor of actions, the refuge of all beings, the witness, the one who imparts consciousness, unconditioned (137) and without qualities' (Śv. 6.11).

Anena hetunā, owing to this reason—because of this presiding over; O son of Kuntī, the *jagat*, world, with the moving and the non-moving things, consisting of the manifest and the unmanifest; *viparivartate*, revolves, under all conditions. (138) All the activities of the world in the form, 'I eat this; I see; I hear this; I experience this happiness, suffer this sorrow; I shall do this for that purpose, (139) I shall do this for this purpose; I shall know this,' etc. indeed arise owing to their being the objects of the conscious witness. They verily exist in consciousness, and end in consciousness. And such *mantras* as, 'He who is the witness of this is in the supreme heaven' (140) (Ṛg., Nā. Sū. 10.129.7; Tai. Bṛ.2.8.9), reveal this fact. Since it follows from this that there is no other conscious being apart from the one Deity—who is the witness of all as the absolute Consciousness, and who in reality has no contact with any kind of enjoyment—, therefore there is no other enjoyer. Hence, in this context, the question, 'For what purpose is this creation?', and its answer are baseless—in accordance with the Vedic text, 'Who know (It) truly, who can fully speak about this here? From where has this come? From where is this variegated creation?' (Ṛg. 3.54.5; 10.129.6). And it has been pointed out by the Lord also: 'Knowledge remains covered by ignorance. Thereby the creatures become deluded' (5.15).

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम्।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम्॥११॥

11. Not knowing My supreme nature as the Lord of all beings, foolish people disregard Me who have taken a human body.

Ajānantaḥ, not knowing; *mama*, My; *param*, supreme; *bhāvam*, nature —My supreme Reality, which is like space, nay, which is subtler and more pervasive than space; as *bhūta-maheśwaram*, the Lord of all beings, the great Lord of all beings who is their Self; *mūḍhāḥ*, foolish people, the non-discriminating ones; *avajānanti*, disregard, belittle; *mām*, Me, although I am by nature thus eternal, pure, intelligent, free and the Self of all beings; and *āśritam*, who have taken; *mānuṣīm tanum*, a human body common to men, that is, when I act with the help of a human body. As a result of that, as a result of continuously disrespecting Me, those wretches get ruined.

How?

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः॥१२॥

12. Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge, and senseless, they become verily possessed of the deceptive disposition of fiends and demons.

Moghāśāḥ, of vain hopes. So also, *mogha-karmāṇaḥ*, of vain actions: their rites, such as Agnihotra etc. which are undertaken by them, verily become vain, fruitless actions, because of dishonouring the Lord, disregarding Him who is their own Self. In this way they are of vain actions.

Similarly, *mogha-jñānāḥ*, of vain knowledge: of fruitless knowledge; even their knowledge verily becomes useless. And *vicetasaḥ*, senseless: that is, they lose their power of discrimination. Besides, (141) they become *śritāḥ*, possessed of; the *mohinīm*, self-deceptive, self-delusive; *prakṛtim*, disposition; *rākṣasīm*, of fiends; and *āsurīm*, of demons—according to which the body is the Self; that is, they become habitually inclined to act cruelly, saying, 'cut, break, drink, eat, steal others' wealth,' etc. (142) This is stated in the Śruti, 'Those worlds of devils (are covered by blinding darkness)' (Īś. 3).

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम्॥१३॥

13. O son of Pṛthā, the noble ones, being possessed of divine nature, surely adore Me with single-mindedness, knowing Me as the immutable source of all objects.

On the other hand, O son of Pṛthā, those *mahāt-mānaḥ*, noble ones—who are not small-minded, who are imbued with faith, and who have set out on the path to Liberation, which is characterized by devotion to God; being *āśritāḥ*, possessed of; *daivīm*, divine; *prakṛtim*, nature—distinguished by mental and physical control, kindness, faith, etc.; *tu*, surely; *bhajante*, adore; *mām*, Me, God; *ananya-manasaḥ*, with single-mindedness; *jñātvā*, knowing Me; as the *avyayam*, immutable; *bhūtādim*, source of all objects, of space etc. (i.e. the five elements) as well as of living beings.

How?

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते॥१४॥

14. Always glorifying Me and striving, the men of firm vows worship Me by paying obeisance to Me and being ever endowed with devotion.

Satatam, always; *kīrtayantaḥ*, glorifying; (143) *mām*, Me, God, who am Brahman in reality; *ca*, and; *yatantaḥ*, striving, endeavouring with the help of such virtues as withdrawal of the organs, control of mind and body, kindness, non-injury, etc.; *dṛḍha-vratāḥ*, the men of firm vows (144) those whose vows are unshakable; *upāsate*, worship Me; *namasyantaḥ*, by paying obeisance; *mām*, to Me, to the Self residing in the heart, *ca*, and; *nitya-yuktāḥ*, being ever endowed; *bhaktyā*, with devotion.

The various ways in which they adore are being stated:

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम्॥१५॥

15. Others verily worship Me by adoring exclusively through the sacrifice of the knowledge of oneness; (others worship Me) multifariously, and (others) as the multiformed existing variously.

Anye, others, giving up other forms of adoration; *ca*, verily; *upāsate*, worship; *mām*, Me, God; *yajantaḥ*, by adoring, glorifying; *api*, exclusively;

jñāna-yajñena ekatvena, through the sacrifice of the knowledge of oneness—knowledge of God itself being the sacrifice; and that knowledge consists in the realization of the highest truth that the supreme Brahman is verily one. Adoring with that (knowledge) they worship Me.

And some others worship Me *pṛthaktvena*, multifariously—in different forms as the sun, moon, etc. They worship (Me) by thinking that Viṣṇu who is God Himself exists in different forms as the sun etc.

Still others worship Me thinking that, that very God who is *viśvatomukhaḥ*, multiformed, who has His face everywhere, that is, who is the Cosmic Person; exists *bahudhā*, variously. In numerous ways they worship Him, the Cosmic Person, who has His face everywhere.

'If they worship in numerous ways, how is it that they worship You alone?' Hence the Lord says:

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञ: स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

16. I am the *kratu*, I am the *yajña*, I am the *svadhā*, I am the *auṣadha*, I am the *mantra*, I Myself am the *ājya*, I am the fire, and I am the act of offering.

Aham, I; am the *kratuḥ*, a kind of Vedic sacrifice; I Myself am the *yajñaḥ*, sacrifice as prescribed by the Smṛtis; further, I am *svadhā*, the food that is offered to the manes; I am *auṣadham*—by which word is meant the food that is eaten by all creatures. Or, *svadhā* means food in general of all creatures, and *auṣadha* means medicine for curing diseases. I am the *mantra* with which offering is made to manes and gods. I Myself am the *ājyam*, oblation; and I am *agniḥ*, the fire—I Myself am the fire into which the oblation is poured. And I am the *hutam*, act of offering.

Besides,

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामह: ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७ ॥

17. Of this world I am the father, mother, ordainer, (and the) grand-father; I am the knowable, the sanctifier, the syllable *Om* as also Ṛk, Sāma

and Yajus.

Asya, of this; *jagataḥ*, world; *aham*, I; am *pitā*, the father; *mātā*, the mother; *dhātā*, ordainer, dispenser of the results of their actions to the creatures; (and the) *pitāmahaḥ*, grand-father. I am the *vedyam*, knowable—that which has to be known; the *pavitram*, sanctifier; (145) and the *oṅkāraḥ*, syllable *Om*; *eva ca*, as also Ṛk, Sāma and Yajus. (146)

Moreover,

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत्।
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम्॥१८॥

18. (I am) the fruit of actions, the nourisher, the Lord, witness, abode, refuge, friend, origin, end, foundation, store and the imperishable seed.

(I am) the *gatiḥ*, fruit of actions; the *bhartā*, nourisher; (147) the *prabhuḥ*, Lord; the *sākṣī*, witness of all that is done or not done by creatures; the *nivāsaḥ*, abode, where creatures live; the *śaraṇam*, refuge, remover of sufferings of the afflicted who take shelter; the *suhṛt*, friend, one who does a good turn without thought of reward; the *prabhavaḥ*, origin of the world; the *pralayaḥ*, end, the place into which the world merges. So also, (I am) the *sthānam*, foundation on which the world rests; the *nidhānam*, store, which is for future enjoyment of creatures; and the *avyayam*, imperishable; *bījam*, seed, the cause of growth of all things which germinate. The seed is imperishable because it continues so long as the world lasts. Indeed, nothing springs up without a seed. And since creation is noticed to be continuous, it is understood that the continuity of the seed never ends.

Further,

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन॥१९॥

19. O Arjuna, I give heat, I withhold and pour down rain. I am verily the nectar, and also death, existence and non-existence.

O Arjuna, *aham*, I, in the form of the sun; *tapāmi*, give heat through some intense rays. Through some rays *utsṛjāmi*, I pour down; *varṣam*, rain.

Having poured down, again *nigṛhṇāmi*, I withdraw it through some rays—for eight months. Again I pour it down in the rainy season. I am *eva ca*, verily; the *amṛtam*, nectar of the gods; and *mṛtyuḥ*, death of the mortals. I Myself am *sat*, existence—the effect which has come into being in relation to its cause; and its opposite, *asat*, non-existence. (148) It is not that the Lord is Himself absolutely non-existent; nor are effect and cause (absolutely) existent and non-existent (respectively).

Those men of Knowledge who meditate on Me while worshipping Me according to the respective forms of *sacrifices* mentioned above—regarding Me as one or multifarious, etc.—, they attain Me alone according to their conceptions.

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा
यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-
मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान्॥२०॥

20. Those who are versed in the Vedas, who are drinkers of Soma and are purified of sin, pray for the heavenly goal by worshipping Me through sacrifices. Having reached the place (world) of the king of gods, which is the result of righteousness, they enjoy in heaven the divine pleasure of gods.

Those, again, who are ignorant and desirous of pleasures, *trai-vidyāḥ*, who are versed in the three Vedas, who know the Ṛk, Yajus and Sāma Vedas; *somapāḥ*, who are drinkers of Soma; and who, as a result of that very drinking of Soma, are *pūta-pāpāḥ*, purified of sin; *prārthayante*, pray for; the *svargatim*, heavenly goal, the attainment of heaven—heaven itself being the goal (149)—; *iṣṭvā*, by worshipping; *mām*, Me, existing in the forms of gods such as the Vasus and others; *yajñaiḥ*, through sacrifices such as the Agniṣṭoma etc. And *āsādya*, having reached; *surendra-lokam*, the place (world) of the king of gods, of Indra; (which is) *puṇyam*, the result of righteousness; *te*, they; *aśnanti*, enjoy; *divi*, in heaven; the *devyān*, divine, heavenly, supernatural; *deva-bhogān*, pleasures of gods.

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं

क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति।
एवं त्रैधर्म्यमनुप्रपन्ना
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते॥२१॥

21. After having enjoyed that vast heavenly world, they enter into the human world on the exhaustion of their merit. Thus, those who follow the rites and duties prescribed in the three Vedas, and are desirous of pleasures, attain the state of going and returning.

Bhuktvā, after having enjoyed; *tam*, that: *viśālam*, vast; *svargalokam*, heavenly world; *te*, they; *viśanti*, enter into; this *martyalokam*, human world; *kṣīṇe*, on the exhaustion; of their *puṇye*, merit. *Evam*, thus, indeed; *anuprapannāḥ*, those who follow in the manner described; *trai-dharmyam*, (150) the rites and duties prescribed in the three Vedas—merely the Vedic rites and duties; and are *kāma-kāmāḥ*, desirous of pleasures; *labhante*, attain; only *gata-āgatam*, the state of going and returning, but never that of independence. This is the meaning.

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम्॥२२॥

22. Those persons who, becoming non-different from Me and meditative, worship Me everywhere, for them, who are ever attached (to Me), I arrange for securing what they lack and preserving what they have.

On the other hand, *ye janāḥ*, those persons, the monks, who are desireless and fully illumined; who *ananyāḥ*, becoming non-different (from Me), having realized the supreme Deity, Nārāyaṇa, as their own Self; and *cintayantaḥ*, becoming meditative; (151) *paryu-pāsate mām*, worship Me everywhere; (152) *teṣām*, for them; who have realized the supreme Truth, *nitya-abhiyuktānām*, who are ever attached (to Me); *aham*, I; *vahāmi*, arrange for; both *yoga-kṣemam*, securing what they lack and preserving what they have. *Yoga* means making available what one does not have, and *kṣema* means the protection of what one has got.

Since 'but the man of Knowledge is the very Self. (This is) My opinion' and 'he too is dear to Me' (7.17,18), therefore they have become My own Self as also dear. Does not the Lord surely arrange for securing what they

lack and protecting what they have even in the case of other devotees? This is true. He does arrange for it. But the difference lies in this: Others who are devotees make their own efforts as well for their own sake, to arrange for securing what they lack and protecting what they have. On the contrary, those who have realized non-duality do not make any effort to arrange for themselves the acquisition of what they do not have and the preservation of what they have. Indeed, they desire nothing for themselves, in life or in death. They have taken refuge only in the Lord. Therefore the Lord Himself arranges to procure what they do not have and protect what they have got.

'If you Yourself are the other gods even, then do not their devotees too worship You alone?' 'Quite so!'

येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम्॥२३॥

23. Even those who, being devoted to other deities and endowed with faith, worship (them), they also, O son of Kuntī, worship Me alone (though) following the wrong method.

Api, even; *ye*, those who; *anya-devatā-bhaktāḥ*, being devoted to other deities; and *anvitāḥ śraddhayā*, endowed with faith; *yajante*, worship (them), *te api*, they also; O son of Kuntī, *yajanti*, worship; *mām*, Me; *eva*, alone; (though) *avidhi-pūrvakam*, following the wrong method. *Avidhi* implies ignorance. So the idea is that they worship (Me) ignorantly.

'How it is that they worship (Me) ignorantly?' (153) This is being answered: Because—

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते॥२४॥

24. I indeed am the enjoyer as also the Lord of all sacrifices; but they do not know Me in reality. Therefore they fall.

As the Self of the deities (of the sacrifices), *aham*, I; *hi*, indeed; am the *bhoktā*, enjoyer; *ca eva*, as also; the *prabhuḥ*, Lord; (154) *sarva-yajñānām*, of all sacrifices enjoined by the Vedas and the Smṛtis. A sacrifice is verily presided over by Me, for it has been said earlier, 'I Myself am the entity

(called Viṣṇu) that exists in the sacrifice in this body' (8.4). *Tu*, but; *na abhi-jānanti*, they do not know; *mām*, Me as such; *tattvena*, in reality. And *ataḥ*, therefore, by worshipping ignorantly; *te*, they; *cyavanti*, fall from the result of the sacrifice. (155)

The result of a sacrifice is inevitable even for those who worship ignorantly out of their devotion to other deities. How?

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितॄन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम्॥२५॥

25. Votaries of the gods reach the gods; the votaries of the manes go to the manes; the worshippers of the Beings reach the Beings; and those who worship Me reach Me.

Deva-vratāḥ, votaries of the gods, those whose religious observances (156) and devotion are directed to the gods; *yānti*, reach, go to; *devān*, the gods. *Pitṛ-vratāḥ*, the votaries of the manes, those who are occupied with such rites as obsequies etc., who are devoted to the manes; go *pitṝn*, to the manes such as Agniṣvātta and others. *Bhūtejyāḥ*, the worshippers of the Beings; reach *bhūtāni*, the Beings such as Vināyaka, the group of Sixteen (divine) Mothers, the Four Sisters, and others. And *madyājinaḥ*, those who worship Me, those who are given to worshipping Me, the devotees of Viṣṇu; reach *mām*, Me alone. Although the effort (involved) is the same, still owing to ignorance they do not worship Me exclusively. Thereby they attain lesser results. This is the meaning. 'Not only do My devotees get the everlasting result in the form of non-return (to this world), but My worship also is easy.' How?

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः॥२६॥

26. Whoever offers Me with devotion—a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I accept that (gift) of the pure-hearted man which has been devotionally presented.

Yaḥ, whoever; *prayaccati*, offers; *me*, Me; *bhaktyā*, with devotion; *patram*, a leaf; *puṣpam*, a flower *phalam*, a fruit; or *toyam*, water; *aśnāmi*, I

accept; *tat*, that (gift)—leaf etc.; *prayata-ātmanaḥ*, of the pure-hearted man; which has been *bhakti-upahṛtam* devotionally presented.

Since this is so, therefore—

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्॥२७॥

27. O son of Kuntī, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as a sacrifice, whatever you give and whatever austerities you undertake, (all) that you offer to Me.

O son of Kuntī, *yat-karoṣi*, whatever you do, what comes spontaneously; (157) *yad-aśnāsi*, whatever you eat; and *yat-juhoṣi*, whatever you offer as a sacrifice, whatever sacrifices you perform—be it prescribed by the Vedas or by the Smṛtis; *yat-dadāsi*, whatever you give—gold, food, clarified butter, etc. to Brāhmaṇas and others; and *yat-tapasyasi*, whatever austerities you undertake; (all) *tat*, that; *kuruṣva madarpaṇam*, you offer to Me.

'Hear what happens to you when you act thus.'

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि॥२८॥

28. Thus, you will become free from bondages in the form of actions which are productive of good and bad results. Having your mind imbued with the yoga of renunciation and becoming free, you will attain Me.

By dedicating to Me *evam*, thus; *mokṣyase*, you will become free; *karma-bandhanaiḥ*, from bondages in the form of actions — actions themselves being the bonds; *śubha-aśubha-phalaiḥ*, which are productive of good and bad results — i.e. from actions that have desirable (*śubha*) and undesirable (*aśubha*) results (*phala*).

Sannyāsa, renunciation, is that which results from dedication (of actions) to Me, and that is also yoga since it involves actions. He who has his mind (*ātmā*) endowed (*yukta*) with that yoga of renunciation (*sannyāsa-yoga*) is *sannyāsa-yoga-yukta-ātmā*.

You, being such, having your mind endowed with the yoga of renunciation, and *vimuktaḥ*, becoming free from the bonds of actions even while living; *upaiṣyasi*, will attain, come; *mām*, to Me, when this body falls.

In that case the Lord is possessed of love and hatred inasmuch as He favours the devotees, and not others? That is not so:

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्॥२९॥

29. I am impartial towards all beings; to Me there is none detestable or none dear. But those who worship Me with devotion, they exist in Me, and I too exist in them.

Aham, I; am *samaḥ*, impartial, equal; *sarva-bhūteṣu*, towards all beings; *me*, to Me; *na asti*, there is none; *dveṣyaḥ*, detestable; *na*, none; *priyaḥ*, dear. I am like fire: As fire does not ward off cold from those who are afar, but removes it from those who approach near, similarly I favour the devotees, not others. *Tu*, but; *ye*, those who; *bhajanti*, worship Me, God; *bhaktyā*, with devotion; *te* they; exist *mayi*, in Me—by their very nature; (158) they do not exist in Me because of My love, *Ca*, and; *aham*, I; *api*, too; naturally exist *teṣu*, in them, not in others. Thus there is no hatred towards them (the latter).

'Listen to the greatness of devotion to Me:'

अपि चेत् सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक्।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः॥३०॥

30. Even if a man of very bad conduct worships Me with one-pointed devotion, he is to be considered verily good; for he has resolved rightly.

Api cet, even if; *su-durācāraḥ*, a man of very bad conduct, of extremely vile behaviour, of very condemnable character; *bhajate*, worships; *mām*, Me; *ananyabhāk*, with one-pointed devotion, with his mind not given to anybody else; *saḥ*, he; *mantavyaḥ*, is to be considered, deemed; *eva*, verily; *sādhuḥ*, good, as well behaved; *hi*, for; *saḥ*, he; *saṁyakvyavasitaḥ*, has resolved rightly, has virtuous intentions.

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्त: प्रणश्यति॥३१॥

31. He soon becomes possessed of a virtuous mind; he attains everlasting peace. Do you proclaim boldly, O son of Kuntī, that My devotee does not get ruined.

Having given up his external evil behaviour due to the strength of his internal proper resolves, *kṣipram bhavati*, he soon becomes; verily *dharma-ātmā*, possessed of a virtuous mind; and *nigaccahti*, he attains; *śaśvat*, everlasting; *śāntim*, peace, quietude (159). O son of Kuntī, listen to the supreme Truth: *Pratijānīhi*, do you proclaim boldly, make a firm declaration; that *me*, My; *bhaktaḥ*, devotee, who has dedicated his inner being to Me; *na*, does not; *praṇaṣyati*, get ruined.

Moreover,

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्यु: पापयोनय:।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम्॥३२॥

32. For, O son of Pṛthā, even those who are born of sin—women, Vaiśyas, as also Śūdras (160)—, even they reach the highest Goal by taking shelter under Me.

Hi, for; O son of Pṛthā, *ye api*, even those; *pāpayonayaḥ syuḥ*, who are born of sin;—as to who they are, the Lord says—*striyaḥ*, women; *vaiśyāḥ*, Vaiśyas, *tathā*, as also; *śūdrāḥ*, Śūdras; *te api*, even they; *yānti*, reach, go to; the *parām*, highest; *gatim*, Goal; *vyapāśritya*, by taking shelter; *mām*, under Me—by accepting Me as their refuge.

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणा: पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम्॥३३॥

33. What to speak of the holy Brāhmaṇas as also of devout kind-sages! Having come to this ephemeral and miserable world, do you worship Me.

Kim punaḥ, what to speak of; the *puṇyāḥ brāhmaṇāḥ*, holy Brāhmaṇas, of sacred birth; *tathā*, as also; of the *bhaktāḥ*, devout; *rājarṣayaḥ*, king-sages—those who are kings and, at the same time, sages! Since this is so, therefore, *prāpya*, having come; *imam*, to this; *anityam*,

ephemeral, ever changeful; and *asukham*, miserable, unhappy; *lokam*, world, the human world—having attained this human life which is a means to Liberation; *bhajasva*, do you worship, devote yourself; *mām* to Me.

How?

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः॥३४॥

34. Having your mind fixed on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, and bow down to Me. By concentrating your mind and accepting Me as the supreme Goal, you shall surely attain Me who am thus the Self.

Manmanā bhava, have your mind fixed on Me; (161) and also be *madbhaktaḥ*, devoted to Me. *Madyājī*, sacrifice to Me, be engaged in sacrificing to Me. And *namaskuru*, bow down; only *mām*, to Me. *Yuktvā*, by concentrating your mind; and *mat-parāyaṇaḥ*, by accepting Me as the supreme Goal; *eṣyasi eva*, you shall surely attain; *mām*, Me who am God. You shall attain Me *evam ātmānam*, who am thus the Self: I indeed am the Self of all the beings, and am also the supreme Goal. You shall attain Me who am such. In this way, the word *ātmānam* (Self) is to be connected with the preceding word *mām* (Me). This is the purport.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[129] *Jñāna* may mean Brahman that is Consciousness, or Its knowledge gathered from the Vedas (*parokṣa-jñāna*). *Vijñāna* is direct experience (*aparokṣa-jñāna*).

[130] The distinction of Knowledge from meditation that was being discussed.

[131] The word *rājā* means a king, or figuratively, the greatest; or, derived from the root *rāj*, to shine, it may mean shining.—Tr.

[132] Aṣṭ. omits the word *sādhana*, disciplines.—Tr.

[133] *Subject-matter*—that the Self, which has no contact with anything, is the substratum of creation, continuance and dissolution.

[134] During creation, continuance and dissolution

[135] *As before*: as in previous cycles of creation.
Cf.: *Sūryā-candramasau dhātā yathā pūrvam akalpayat, divam ca pṛthivīm cāntarikṣamatho svaḥ.*
*(*Ṛg. 10.190.3; Tai. Ār. 10.1.14)—Tr.

[136] See under 8.19, introductory Commentary.—Tr.

[137] This is according to Śaṇkarācārya's commentary on this verse. Ā.G. interprets *kevala* as non-dual.—Tr.

[138] During creation, continuance and dissolution.

[139] Aṣṭ. omits this portion. —Tr

[140] *Supreme heaven*, the heart; that is He is inscrutable.

[141] *Besides*, in the next birth...

[142] The habit to cut, break, drink, eat, etc. is characteristic of fiends. The habit of stealing others' wealth, etc. is characteristic of demons.

[143] *Glorifying* through the study of the Vedānta and repetition of *Om.*

[144] *Vows* such as celibacy.

[145] Virtuous actions.

[146] Brahman, which has to be known, is realizable through *Om*, regarding which fact the three Vedas are the authority. The *ca* (as also) is suggestive of the Atharva-veda.

[147] The giver of the fruits of actions.

[148] *Non-existence*: the cause which has not become manifest as the effect possessing name and form. It cannot be admitted that the effect has absolute existence, for the Upaniṣad says, 'All transformation has speech as its basis, and it is name only' (Ch.6. 1. 4). Nor can it be said that the cause has absolute non-existence, for there is the text, '...by what logic can the existent come verily out of non-existence? But surely,...all this was Existence, one without a second' (op. cit. 6.2.2).

[149] Aṣṭ. adds this portion—*svareva gatiḥ*, heaven itself being the goal.—Tr.

[150] A variant reading is *trayī-dharmam*.—Tr.

[151] 'Having known that I, Vāsudeva, am the Self of all, and there is nothing else besides Me'.

[152] 'They see Me as the one, all-pervading, infinite Reality.'

[153] i.e. the worshippers of other deities worship them knowingly, and hence, how can the question of their ignorance arise?

[154] *The Lord*: 'I being the indwelling Ruler of all.'

[155] 'Although they perform sacrifices with great diligence, still just because they do not know My real nature and do not offer the fruits of their sacrifices to Me, they proceed to the worlds of the respective deities through the Southern Path (beginning with *smoke*; see 8.25). Then, after the exhaustion of the results of those sacrifices and the falling of the respective bodies (assumed in those worlds) they return to the human world for re-embodiment.'—M.S. (See also 9.20–1.)

[156] Making offerings and presents, circumambulation, bowing down, etc.

[157] Actions such as walking etc., that are spontaneous, not injunctions of the scriptures.

[158] 'Their mind becomes fit for My manifestation, as it has been purified by following the virtuous path.'

[159] Cessation of evil acts.

[160] Ś.'s construction of this portion is: women, Vaiśyas as also Śūdras, and even others who are born of sin (that is, those who are born low and are of vile deeds, namely Mlecchas, Pukkasas and others). M.S. also takes *pāpa-yonayaḥ* (born of sin) as a separate phrase, and classifies women and others only as those debarred from Vedic study, etc.—Tr.

[161] Here Aṣṭ. adds the word Vāsudeva. —Tr

CHAPTER 10

THE DIVINE GLORY

In the seventh chapter, as also in the ninth, have been revealed the reality (1) and the glories (2) of the Lord. Thereafter, now have to be presented those manifestations through which the Lord is to be meditated on. And the reality of the Lord also, though spoken of earlier, has to be repeated because of its inscrutability. Hence—

The Blessed Lord said:

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया॥१॥

1. O mighty-armed one, listen over again to My supreme utterance, which I, wishing your welfare, shall speak to you who take delight (in it).

O mighty-armed one, *śṛṇu*, listen; *bhūyaḥ eva*, over again; *me*, to My; *paramam*, supreme; *vacaḥ*, utterance, which is expressive of the transcendental Reality; *yat*, which supreme Truth; *aham*, I; *vakṣyāmi*, shall speak; *te*, to you; *prīyamāṇāya*, who take delight (in it). You become greatly pleased by My utterance, like one drinking ambrosia. Hence, I shall speak to you *hita-kāmyayā*, wishing your welfare.

'Why shall I speak?' In answer to this the Lord says:

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः॥२॥

2. Neither the gods nor the great sages know My majesty. For, in all respects, I am the source of the gods and the great sages.

Na sura-gaṇāḥ, neither the gods—Brahmā and others; *viduḥ*, know;—what do they not know?—*me*, My; *prabhavam* (*prabhāvam*), majesty, abundance of lordly power—or, derived in the sense of 'coming into being', it means origin. Nor even the *maharṣayaḥ*, great sages, Bhṛgu and others (3), know. Why do they not know? This is being stated: *Hi*, for; *sarvaśaḥ*, in

all respects; *aham*, I; am *ādiḥ*, the source, the cause (4); *devānām*, of the gods; *ca*, and; *maharṣīṇām*, of the great sages.

Besides,

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम्।
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते॥३॥

3. He who knows Me—the birthless, the beginningless, and the great Lord of the worlds, he, the undeluded one among mortals, becomes freed from all sins.

Yaḥ, he who; *vetti*, knows; *mām*, Me; *ajam*, the birthless; and *anādim*, the beginningless: Since I am the source of the gods and the great sages, and nothing else exists as My origin, therefore I am birthless and beginningless. Being without an origin is the cause of being birthless. He who knows Me who am thus birthless and beginningless, and *loka-maheśwaram*, the great Lord of the worlds, the transcendental One devoid of ignorance and its effects; *saḥ*, he; the *asammūḍhaḥ*, undeluded one; *martyeṣu*, among mortals, among human beings; *pramucyate*, becomes freed; *sarva-pāpaiḥ*, from all sins—committed knowingly or unknowingly.

'For the following reason also I am the great Lord of the worlds:'

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च॥४॥

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः॥५॥

4. Intelligence, wisdom, non-delusion, forgiveness, truth, control of the external organs, control of the internal organs, happiness, sorrow, birth, death and fear as also fearlessness;

5. Non-injury, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame, infamy—(these) different dispositions of beings spring from Me alone.

Buddhiḥ, intelligence—the power of the internal organ to know of things which are subtle etc. Indeed, people talk of a man possessed of this (power) as intelligent. *Jñānam*, wisdom—knowledge of entities such as the

Self etc. *Asammohaḥ*, non-delusion—proceeding with discrimination with regard to things that are to be known as they present themselves. *Kṣamā*, forgiveness—imperturbability of the mind of one who is abused or assaulted. *Satyam*, truth—an utterance regarding what one has seen, heard, and felt oneself, communicated as such to others for their understanding, is said to be truth. *Damaḥ*, control of the external organs. *Śamaḥ*, control of the internal organs. *Sukham*, happiness. *Duḥkham*, sorrow. *Bhavaḥ*, birth; and its opposite *abhāvaḥ*, death. And *bhayam*, fear; as also its opposite *abhayam*, fearlessness. *Ahiṁsā*, non-injury—non-cruelty towards creatures. *Samatā*, equanimity. *Tuṣṭiḥ*, satisfaction—the idea of sufficiency with regard to things acquired. *Tapaḥ*, austerity—disciplining the body through control of the organs. *Dānam*, charity—distribution (of wealth) according to one's capacity. *Yaśaḥ*, fame—renown arising from righteousness. On the contrary, *ayaśaḥ* is infamy due to unrighteousness. (These) *pṛthāk-vidhaḥ*, different; *bhāvāḥ*, dispositions—intelligence etc. as described; *bhūtānām*, of beings, of living beings; *bhavanti*, spring; *mattaḥ eva*, from Me alone, (5) from God, in accordance with their actions.

Moreover,

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः॥६॥

6. The seven great sages as also the four Manus of ancient days, of whom are these creatures in the world, had their thoughts fixed on Me, and they were born from My mind.

Sapta, the seven; *maharṣayaḥ*, great sages—Bhṛgu and others; *tathā*, as also; *catvāraḥ*, the four; *manavaḥ*, Manus (6)—well known as Sāvarṇas; *pūrve*, of ancient days; *yeṣām*, of whom, of which Manus and the great sages; *imāḥ*, these; *prajāḥ*, creatures, moving and non-moving; *loke* in the world, are the creation; *madbhāvāḥ*, had their thoughts fixed on Me—they had their minds fixed on Me, (and hence) they were endowed with the power of Viṣṇu; and they *jātāḥ*, were born; *mānasā*, from My mind—they were created by Me through My mind itself.

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः॥७॥

7. One who knows truly this majesty and yoga of Mine, he becomes imbued with unwavering Yoga. There is no doubt about this.

Yaḥ, one who; *vetti*, knows; *tattvataḥ*, truly, that is just as it is; *etām*, this, aforesaid; *vibhūtim*, majesty, (divine) manifestations; (7) and *yogam*, yoga, action, My own ability to achieve (8)—or, the capacity for mystic powers, the omniscience resulting from yoga (meditation), is called yoga; *saḥ*, he; *yujyate*, becomes imbued with; *avikampena*, unwavering; *yogena*, Yoga, consisting in steadfastness in perfect knowledge. (9) There is no *samśayaḥ*, doubt; *atra*, about this.

With what kind of unwavering Yoga does he become endued? This is being answered:

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः॥८॥

8. I am the origin of all; everything moves on owing to Me. Realizing thus, the wise ones, filled with fervour, adore Me.

Aham, I, the supreme Brahman called Vāsudeva; am the *prabhavaḥ*, origin; *sarvasya*, of all, of the whole world; *sarvam*, everything, the whole world of changes, consisting of continuance, destruction, action and enjoyment of the fruits of action; *pravartate*, moves on; *mattaḥ*, owing to Me alone. *Matvā*, realizing; *iti*, thus; the *budhāḥ*, wise ones, the knowers of the supreme Reality; *bhāva-samanvitāḥ*, filled with fervour—*bhāva* is the same as *bhāvanā*, meaning ardent longing for the supreme Reality; filled (*samanvitāḥ*) with that, i.e. imbued with that; *bhajante*, adore; *mām*, Me.

Besides,

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम्।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च॥९॥

9. With minds fixed on Me, with lives dedicated to Me, enlightening each other, and always speaking of Me, they derive satisfaction and rejoice.

Maccittāḥ, with minds fixed on Me; *mad-gataprāṇāḥ*, with lives (*prāṇas*) dedicated to Me, or having their organs, eyes etc. absorbed in Me, that is having their organs withdrawn into Me; *bodhayantaḥ*, enlightening;

parasparam, each other; and *nityam*, always; *kathayantaḥ*, speaking of; *mām*, Me, as possessed of qualities like knowledge, strength, valour, etc; *tuṣyanti*, they derive satisfaction; and *ramanti*, rejoice, get happiness, as by coming in contact with a dear one.

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम्।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते॥१०॥

10. To them who are ever devoted and worship Me with love, I grant that possession of wisdom by which they reach Me.

Teṣām, to them, who, becoming devotees, adore Me in the manner described earlier; *satata-yuktānām*, who are ever devoted, ever attached, who have become free from all external desires; and *bhajatām*, who worship—. Is it because of hankering for possessions? The Lord says: No, (they worship) *prīti-pūrvakam*, with love. To them who worship Me with that (love), *dadāmi*, I grant; *tam*, that; *buddhi-yogam*, possession of wisdom—*buddhi* means full enlightenment with regard to My real nature; coming in possession (*yoga*) of that is *buddhi-yoga*; *yena*, by which possession of wisdom consisting in full enlightenment; *upayānti*, they reach, realize as their own Self; *mām*, Me, the supreme God who is the Self. Who do so? *Te*, they, who adore Me through such disciplines as fixing their minds on Me, etc.

'For what purpose, or as the destroyer of what cause standing as an obstacle on the way of reaching You, do You bestow that possession of wisdom to those devotees of Yours?'

In reply to such a query the Lord says:

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता॥११॥

11. Out of compassion for them alone, I, residing in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance with the luminous lamp of Knowledge.

Anukampārtham, out of compassion; *teṣām eva*, for them alone, anxious as to how they may have bliss; *aham*, I; *ātmabhāvasthaḥ*, residing in their hearts—*atmabhāvaḥ* means the seat that is the heart; being seated

there itself; *nāśayāmi*, destroy; *tamaḥ*, the darkness; *ajñānajam*, born of ignorance, originating from non-discrimination, the darkness of delusion known as false comprehension; *jñāna-dīpena*, with the lamp of Knowledge, in the form of discriminating comprehension; that is *bhāsvatā*, with the luminous lamp of Knowledge—fed by the oil of divine grace resulting from devotion, fanned by the wind of intensity of meditation on Me, having the wick of the intellect imbued with the impressions arising from such disciplines as celibacy etc., in the receptacle of the detached mind, placed in the windless shelter of the mind withdrawn from objects and untainted by likes and dislikes, and made luminous by full Illumination resulting from the practice of constant concentration and meditation.

After hearing the above-described majesty and yoga of the Lord,

Arjuna said:

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान्।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम्॥१२॥

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे॥१३॥

12–13. You are the supreme Brahman, the supreme Light, the supreme Sanctifier. All the sages as also the divine sage Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa (10) call You the eternal divine Person, the Primal God, the Birthless, the Omnipresent; and You Yourself verily tell me (so).

Bhavān, You; are the *param brahma*, supreme Brahman, the supreme Self; the *param dhāma*, supreme Light; the *paramam pavitram*, supreme Sanctifier. *Sarve*, all; *ṛṣayaḥ*, the sages—Vasiṣṭha and others; *tathā*, as also; the *devarṣiḥ*, divine sage; *nāradaḥ*, Nārada; Asita and Devala *āhuḥ*, call; *tvām*, You; thus: *Śāśvatam*, the eternal; *divyam*, divine; *puruṣam*, Person; *ādi-devam*, the Primal God, the God who preceded all the gods; *ajam*, the birthless; *vibhum*, the Omnipresent—capable of assuming diverse forms. And even Vyāsa also speaks in this very way. *Ca*, and; *svayam*, You Yourself; *eva*, verily; *bravīṣi*, tell; *me*, me (so).

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव।

न हि ते भगवन् व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः॥१४॥

14. O Keśava, I accept to be true all this which You tell me. Certainly, O Lord, neither the gods nor the demons comprehend Your glory.

O Keśava, *manye*, I accept; to be *ṛtam*, true indeed; *sarvam*, all; *etat*, this that has been said by the sages and You; *yat*, which; *vadasi*, You tell, speak; *mām*, to Me. *Hi*, certainly; *bhagavan*, O Lord; *na devāḥ*, neither the gods; *na dānavāḥ*, nor the demons; *viduḥ*, comprehend; *te*, Your; *vyaktim*, glory (11).

Since You are the origin of the gods and others, therefore,

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते॥१५॥

15. O supreme Person, the Creator of beings, the Lord of beings, God of gods, the Lord of the worlds, You Yourself alone know Yourself by Yourself.

Puruṣottama, O supreme Person; *bhūta-bhāvana*, O Creator of beings, one who brings the creatures into being; *bhūteśa*, the Lord of beings; *deva-deva*, O God of gods; *jagat-pate*, the Lord of the worlds; *tvam*, You; *svayam*, Yourself; *eva*, alone; *vettha*, know; *ātmānam*, Yourself, as God possessed of unsurpassable powers of knowledge, sovereignty, strength, etc.; *ātmanā*, by Yourself.

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि॥१६॥

16. Be pleased to speak in full of Your own manifestations which are indeed divine, through which manifestations You exist pervading these worlds.

Arhasi, be pleased; *vaktum*, to speak; *aśeṣeṇa*, in full; *ātmavibhūtayaḥ*, of Your own manifestations; *divyāḥ hi*, which are indeed divine; *yābhiḥ*, through which; *vibhūtibhiḥ*, manifestations, manifestations of Your glory; *tiṣṭhasi*, You exist; *vyāpya*, pervading; *imān*, these; *lokān*, worlds.

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन्।

केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया॥१७॥

17. O Yogī, (12) how shall I know You by remaining ever-engaged in meditation? And through what objects, O Lord, are You to be meditated on by me?

O Yogī, *katham*, how; *aham vidyām*, shall I know; *tvām*, You; *sadā pari-cintayan*, by remaining ever-engaged in meditation? *Ca*, and; *keṣu keṣu bhāveṣu*, through what objects; *bhagavan*, O Lord; *cintaḥ asi*, are You to be meditated on; *mayā*, by me?

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम्॥१८॥

18. O Janārdana, narrate to me again (13) Your own yoga and (divine) manifestations elaborately. For, while hearing (Your) nectar-like (words), there is no satiety in me.

O Janārdana: *ardana* is derived from *ard*, in the sense of the act of going; by virtue of making the *janas*, the demons who are opposed to the gods, go to hell etc. He is called Jana-ardana. Or, He is called so because He is prayed to (14) by all beings for the sake of human goals, viz. prosperity and Liberation.

Kathaya, narrate to me; *bhūyaḥ*, again, though spoken of earlier; *ātmanaḥ*, Your own; *yogam*, yoga—the special ability in the form of mystic powers; and *vibhūtim*, the (divine) manifestations—the variety of the objects of meditation; *vistareṇa*, elaborately. *Hi*, for; *śṛṇvataḥ*, while hearing; (Your) *amṛtam*, nectar-like speech issuing out of Your mouth; *na asti*, there is no; *tṛptiḥ*, satiety; *me*, in me.

The Blessed Lord said—

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे॥१९॥

19. O best of the Kurus, now, according to their importance, I shall described to you My own glories, which are indeed divine. There is no end to my manifestations.

Kuru-śreṣṭha, O best of the Kurus; *hanta*, now; since, on the other hand, it is not possible to speak exhaustively of them even in a hundred years, (therefore) *prādhānyataḥ*, according to their importance, according as those manifestations are pre-eminent in their respective spheres; *kathayiṣyāmi*, I shall describe; *te*, to you; *ātma-vibhūtayaḥ*, My own glories; which are (*hi*, indeed) *divyāḥ*, divine, heavenly. *Na asti* there is no; *antaḥ*, end; *me*, to My; *vistarasya*, manifestations.

'Of those, now listen to the foremost:'

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च॥२०॥

20. O Guḍākeśa, I am the Self residing in the hearts of all beings, and I am the beginning and the middle as also the end of (all) beings.

Guḍākeśa, O Guḍākeśa—*guḍākā* means sleep, and *īśa* means master; master of that (sleep) is *guḍākeśa*, that is one who has conquered sleep; [15] or, one who has got thick hair; *aham*, I; am the *ātmā*, Self, the indwelling Self; who is to be ever-meditated on as *sarva-bhūta-āśaya* [16]*-sthitaḥ*, residing in the hearts of all beings. And, by one who is unable to do so, I am to be meditated on through the following aspects. I am capable of being meditated on (through them) because *aham*, I; am verily the *ādiḥ*, beginning, the origin; and the *madhyam*, middle, continuance; *ca*, as also; the *antaḥ*, end, dissolution; *bhūtānām*, of (all) beings.

'I am to be meditated upon thus also:'

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान्।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी॥२१॥

21. Among the Ādityas [17] I am Viṣṇu; among the luminaries, the radiant sun; among the (forty-nine) Maruts [18] I am Marīci; among the stars I am the moon.

Ādityānām, among the twelve Ādityas; *aham*, I; am the Āditya called Viṣṇu. *Jyotiṣām*, among the luminaries; *aṁśumān*, the radiant; *raviḥ*, sun. *Marutām*, among the different gods called Maruts; *asmi*, I am; the one called Marīci. *Nakṣatrāṇām*, among the stars; I am *śasī*, the moon.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना॥२२॥

22. Among the Vedas I am Sāma-veda; among the gods I am Indra. Among the organs I am the mind, and I am the intelligence in creatures.

Vedānām, among the Vedas; I am the Sāma-veda. *Devānām*, among the gods—such as Rudras, Ādityas and others; I am *vāsavaḥ*, Indra. *Indriyāṇām*, among the eleven organs, viz. eye etc.; I am the *manaḥ*, mind. I am the mind which is of the nature of reflection and doubt. And I am the *cetanā*, intelligence (19), the function of the intellect ever manifest in the aggregate of body and organs; *bhūtānam*, in creatures.

रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम्।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम्॥२३॥

23. Among the Rudras (20) I am Saṅkara, and among the Yakṣas and goblins I am Kubera (21). Among the Vasus (22) I am Fire, and among the mountains I am Meru.

Rudrāṇām, among the eleven Rudras, I am *Śaṅkara*; and *yakṣarakṣasām*, among the Yakṣas and goblins; I am *vitteśaḥ*, Kubera. *Vasūnām*, among the eight Vasus; I am *pāvakaḥ*, Fire; and *śikhariṇām*, among the peaked mountains, I am Meru.

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम्।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः॥२४॥

24. O son of Pṛthā, know me to be Bṛhaspati, the foremost among the priests of kings. Among commanders of armies I am Skanda; among large expanses of water I am the sea.

O son of Pṛthā *viddhi*, know; *mām*, Me; to be Bṛhaspati, *mukhyam*, the foremost; *purodhasām*, among the priests of kings. Being as he is the priest of Indra, he should be the foremost. *Senānīnām*, among commanders of armies; I am Skaṇḍa, the commander of the armies of gods. *Sarasām*, among large expanses of water, among reservoirs dug by gods (that is among natural reservoirs); I am *sāgaraḥ*, the sea.

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम्।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः॥२५॥

25. Among the great sages I am Bhṛgu; of words I am the single syllable (*Om*) (23). Among rituals I am the ritual of Japa (24); of the immovables, the Himālaya.

Maharṣīnām, among the great sages, I am Bhṛgu, *Girām*, of words, of utterances, in the form of words; I am the *ekam*, single; *akṣaram*, syllable Om. *Yajñānām*, among rituals; I am the *japa-yajñaḥ*, rituals of Japa. *Sthāvarāṇām*, of the immovables, I am the Himālaya.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः।
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः॥२६॥

26. Among all trees (I am) the Aśvattha (Peepul), and Nārada among the divine sages. Among the *gandharvas (25)*(I am) Citraratha; among the perfected ones, the sage Kapila.

Sarva-vṛkṣāṇām, among all trees, (I am) the Aśvattha; and Nārada *devarṣīṇām*, among the divine sages—those who were gods and became sages by virtue of visualizing Vedic *mantras*; among them I am Nārada. *Gandharvāṇām*, among the *gandharvas*, I am the *gandharva* called Citraratha. *Siddhānām*, among the perfected ones, among those who, from their very birth, were endowed with an abundance of the wealth of virtue, knowledge and renunciation; (I am) *muniḥ*, the sage Kapila.

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम्।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम्॥२७॥

27. Among horses, know Me to be Uccaiḥśravas, born of nectar; Airāvata among the lordly elephants; and among men, the King of men. (26)

Aśvānām, among horses; *viddhi*, know; *mām*, Me; to be the horse named Uccaiḥśravas; *amṛta-udbhavam*, born of nectar—born when (the sea was) churned (by the gods) for nectar. Airāvata, the son of Īrāvatī, *gajendrāṇām*, among the lordly elephants; 'know Me to be so' remains understood. And *narāṇām*, among men; know Me as the *narādhipam*, King of men.

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक्।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः॥२८॥

28. Among weapons I am the thunderbolt; among cows I am Kāmadhenu. I am Kandarpa, the Progenitor, and among serpents I am Vasuki.

Āyudhānām, among weapons; I am the *vajram*, thunderbolt, made of the bones of (the sage) Dadhīci. *Dhenūnām*, among milch cows; I am *kāma-dhuk*, Kāmadhenu, which was the yielder of all desires of (the sage) Vasiṣṭha; or it means a cow in general which gives milk at all times. I am Kandarpa, *prajanaḥ*, the Progenitor, (the god) Kāma (Cupid). *Sarpāṇām*, among serpents, among the various serpents, I am Vāsuki, the King of serpents.

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम्।
पितॄणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम्॥२९॥

29. Among snakes I am Ananta, and Varuṇa among gods of the waters. Among the manes I am Aryamā, and among the maintainers of law and order I am Yama (King of death).

Nāgānām, among snakes, of a particular species of snakes; *asmi*, I am Ananta, the King of snakes. And Varuna, the King *yādasām*, of the gods of the waters. Pitṛṇām, among the manes; I am the King of the manes, named Aryamā. And *saṁyamatām*, among the maintainers of law and order I am Yama.

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम्।
मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम्॥३०॥

30. Among demons I am Prahlāda, and I am Time among reckoners of time. And among animals I am the lion, and among birds I am Garuḍa.

Daityānām, among demons, the descendants of Diti, I am the one called Prahlāda. And I am *kālaḥ*, Time; *kalayatām*, among reckoners of time, of those who calculate. And *mṛgāṇām*, among animals; I am *mṛgendraḥ*, the lion, or the tiger. And *pakṣiṇam*, among birds; (I am) *vainateyaḥ*, Garuḍa, the son of Vinatā.

पवन: पवतामस्मि राम: शस्त्रभृतामहम्।
झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी॥३१॥

31. Of the purifiers I am air; among the wielders of weapons I am Rāma. Among fishes, too, I am the shark; I am Gangā among rivers.

Pavatām, of the purifiers; I am *pavanaḥ*, air. *Śastra-bhṛtām*, among weilders of weapons, I am Rāma, son of Daśaratha. *Jhaṣāṇām*, among fishes etc; I am the particular species of fish called *makaraḥ* shark. I am *jāhnavī*, Gangā; *srotasām*, among rivers, among streams of water.

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वाद: प्रवदतामहम्॥३२॥

32. O Arjuna, of creations I am the beginning and the end as also the middle. I am the knowledge of the Self among knowledge; of those who debate I am *Vāda*.

O Arjuna *sargāṇām*, of creations; I am the *ādiḥ*, beginning; *ca*, and; the *antaḥ*, end; *ca eva*, as also; the *madhyam*, middle—I am the origin, continuance and dissolution. At the commencement (verse 20) origin, end, etc. only of things possessed of souls were spoken of, but here the mention is of all creations in general. This is the difference. *Vidyānām*, among knowledge; I am the *adhyātma-vidyā*, knowledge of the Self, it being the foremost because of its leading to Liberation. *Pravadatām*, of those who debate; *aham*, I; am *vādaḥ*, *Vāda*, which is pre-eminent since it is a means to determining true purport. Hence I am that. By the word *pravadatām* are here meant the different kinds of debate held by debators, viz. *Vāda*, *Jalpa*, and *Vitaṇḍā*. (27)

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्व: सामासिकस्य च।
अहमेवाक्षय: कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुख:॥३३॥

33. Of the letters I am the letter *a*, and of the group of compound words I am (the compound called) *Dvandva*. (28) I Myself am the infinite time; I am the Dispenser with faces everywhere.

Aksarāṇām, of the letters; I am the *akāraḥ*, letter *a*. *Sāmāsikasya*, of the group of compound words, I am the compound (called) *Dvandva*. Besides,

aham eva, I Myself; am the *akṣayaḥ*, infinite, endless; *kālaḥ*, time, well known as ‘moment’ etc.; or, I am the supreme God who is Kāla (Time, the measurer) even of time. I am the *dhātā*, Dispenser, the dispenser of the fruits of actions of the whole world; *viśvatomukhaḥ*, with faces everywhere.

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम्।
कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा॥३४॥

34. And I am Death, the destroyer of all; and the prosperity of those destined to be prosperous. Of the feminine (29)
(I am) fame, beauty, speech, memory, intelligence, fortitude and forbearance.

Death which is of two kinds—one destroying wealth, and the other destroying life—, (30) is called *sarva-haraḥ*, the destroyer of all. I am that. This is the meaning. Or, the supreme God is the all-destroyer because He destroys everything during dissolution. I am He. And I am *udbhavaḥ*, prosperity, eminence, and the means to it. Of whom? *Bhaviṣyatām*, of those destined to be prosperous, that is of those who are fit for attaining eminence.

Nārīṇām, of the feminine qualities; I am *kīrtiḥ*, fame; *śrīḥ*, beauty; *vāk*, speech; *smṛtiḥ*, memory; *medhā*, intelligence *dhṛtiḥ*, fortitude; and *kṣamā*, forbearance. I am these excellent feminine qualities, by coming to possess even a trace of which one considers himself successful.

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम्।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः॥३५॥

35. I am also the Bṛhat-sāma of the Sāma (-*mantras*); of the metres, Gāyatrī. Of the months I am Mārga-śīrṣa, and of the seasons, spring.

I am *tathā*, also; the Bṛhat-sāma, the foremost *sāmnām*, of the Sāma-*mantras*. *Chandasām*, of the metres, of the Rk-*mantras* having the metres Gāyatrī etc.; I am the Ṛk called Gāyatrī. This is meaning. *Māsānām*, of the months, I am Mārga-śīrṣa (Agrahāyana, November-December). *Ṛtūnām*, of the seasons; *kusumākaraḥ*, spring.

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम्।

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम्॥३६॥

36. Of the fraudulent I am the gambling; I am the irresistible command of the mighty. I am excellence, I am effort, I am the *sattva* quality of those possessed of *sattva*.

Chalayatām, of the fraudulent, of the deceitful; I am the *dyūtam*, gambling, such as playing with dice. I am the *tejaḥ*, irresistible command; *tejasvinām*, of the mighty. (31) I am the *jayaḥ*, excellence of the excellent. (32) I am the *vyavasāyaḥ*, effort of the persevering. I am the *sattvam*, *sattva* quality; (33) *sattva-vatām*, of those possessed of *sattva*.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः॥३७॥

37. Of the Vṛṣṇis (34) I am Vāsudeva; of the Pāṇḍavas, Dhanañjaya (Arjuna). And of the wise, I am Vyāsa; of the omniscient, the omniscient Uśanas.

Vṛṣṇīnām, of the Vṛṣṇis, (35) I am Vāsudeva—I who am this person, your friend. *Pāṇḍavānām*, of the Pāṇḍavas, (I am) Dhanañjaya, you yourself. *Api*, and; *munīnām*, of the wise, of the thoughtful, of those who know of all things, I am Vyāsa. *Kavīnām*, of the omniscient (that is of the those who know the past, present and future), I am the omniscient Uśanas (Śukrācārya).

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम्।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम्॥३८॥

38. Of the punishers I am the rod; I am the righteous policy of those who desire to conquer. And of things secret, I am verily silence; I am knowledge of the men of knowledge.

Damayatām, of the punishers; I am *danḍaḥ*, the rod, which is the means of controlling the lawless. I am the *nītiḥ*, righteous policy; *jigīṣatām*, of those who desire to conquer. And *guhyānām*, of things secret; I am verily *maunam*, silence. I am *jñānam*, knowledge; *jñānavatām*, of the men of knowledge.

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम्॥३९॥

39. Moreover, O Arjuna, whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that I am. There is no thing moving or non-moving which can exist without Me.

Ca, moreover; O Arjuna, *yat api*, whatsoever; is the *bījam*, seed, the source of growth; *sarva-bhūtānām*, of all beings; *tat*, that I am. As a conclusion of the topic, the Lord states in brief His divine manifestations: *Na tat asti bhūtam*, there is no thing; *cara-acaram*, moving or non-moving; *yat*, which; *syāt*, can exist; *vinā mayā*, without Me. For whatever is rejected by Me, from whatever I withdraw Myself will have no substance, and will become a non-entity. Hence the meaning is that everything has Me as its essence.

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परन्तप।
एष तूद्देशत: प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया॥४०॥

40. O destroyer of enemies, there is no limit to My divine manifestations. This description of (My) manifestations, however, has been stated by Me by way of illustration.

Parantapa, O destroyer of enemies; *asti*, there is; *na*, no; *antaḥ*, limit; to *mama*, My; *divyānām*, divine; *vibhūtīnām*, manifestations. Indeed, it is not possible for anyone to speak or know of the limit of the divine manifestations of the all-pervading God. *Eṣaḥ*, this; *vistaraḥ*, description; *vibhūteḥ*, of (My) manifestations; *tu*, however; *proktaḥ*, has been stated; *mayā*, by Me; *uddeśataḥ*, by way of illustration, partially.

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंऽशसम्भवम्॥४१॥

41. Whatever object (36) is verily endowed with majesty, possessed of prosperity, or is energetic, you know for certain each of them as having a part of My power as its source.

Yat yat, whatever; *sattvam*, object in the world; is *eva*, verily; *vibhūtimat*, endowed with majesty; *śrīmad*, possessed of prosperity; *vā*, or; is *ūrjitam*, energetic, possessed of vigour; *tvam*, you; *avagaccha*, know;

eva, for certain; *tat tat*, each of them; as *mama tejoṁśa-sambhavam*, having a part (*aṁśa*) of My (*mama*), of God's, power (*teja*) as its source (*sambhavam*).

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत्॥४२॥

42. Or, on the other hand, what is the need of your knowing this extensively, O Arjuna? I remain sustaining this whole creation in a special way with a part (of Myself).

Athavā, or, on the other hand; *kim*, what is the need; of *tava jñātena*, your knowing; *etena bahunā*, this extensively—but incompletely—in the above manner, O Arjuna? You listen to this subject that is going to be stated in its fullness: *Aham*, I; *sthitaḥ*, remain; *viṣṭabhya*, sustaining, supporting, holding firmly, in a special way; *idam*, this; *kṛtsnam*, whole; *jagat*, creation; *ekāṁśena*, by a part, by a *foot* *(37)* (of Myself), that is as the Self of all things (38). The Vedic text, 'All beings form a *foot* of His' (Ṛg., Pu. Sū. 10.90.3; Tai. Ār. 3.12.3) supports this. (39)

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *Reality*, both immanent and transcendent.

[2] *Glory*: the aids to the realization of the qualified and the unqualified aspects of God.

[3] Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vaśiṣṭha.—Tr.

[4] *The cause*: 'I am both the efficient and the material cause of everything.'

[5] This is said in the sense that none of these dispositions can exist without the Self.

[6] Sāvarṇi, Dharma-sāvarṇi, Dakṣa-sāvarṇi, and Sāvarṇa.—Tr.

[7] Omnipresence.

[8] God’s omnipotence. (God’s power of accomplishing the impossible.—M.S.)

[9] After realizing the Personal God, he attains the transcendental Reality; the earlier knowledge leads to the latter.

[10] Although Nārada and the other sages are already mentioned by the words ‘all the sages’, still they are named separately because of their eminence. Asita is the father of Devala.

[11] *Prabhavam* in the Commentary is the same as *prabhāvam*, glory, the unqualified State.

[12] Here *yoga* stands for the results of yoga, viz. omniscience, omnipotence, etc.; one possessed of these is a yogī. (See Comm. on 10.7)

[13] In addition to what has been said in the seventh and ninth chapters.

[14] The verbal root *ard* has got a second meaning, ‘to pray’.

[15] See also under 1.24.—Tr.

[16] *Āśaya*—that in which are contained the impressions of meditations (*upāsanās*), actions and past experiences.

[17]viz. Dhātā, Mitra, Aryamā, Rudra, Varuṇa, Sūrya, Bhaga, Vivasvān, Pūṣā, Savitā, Tvaṣṭā and Viṣṇu.—Tr.

[18] The seven groups of Maruts are Āvaha, Pravaha, Vivaha, Parāvaha, Udvaha, Saṁvaha and Parivaha.—Tr.

[19] It is the medium for the manifestation of Consciousness.

[20] Aja, Ekapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Pinākī, Aparājita, Tryambaka, Maheśvara, Vrṣākapi, Śambhu, Haraṇa and Iśvara. Different Purāṇas give different lists of eleven names.—Tr.

[21] God of wealth. Yakṣas are a class of demigods who attend on him and guard his wealth.

[22] According to the V.P. they are: Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dharma, Anila, Anala (Fire), Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa. The Mbh. and the Bh. given a different list.—Tr.

[23] *Om* is the best because it is the name as well as the symbol of Brahman.

[24] *Japa*, muttering prayers—repeating passages from the Vedas, silently repeating names of deities, etc. Rituals often involve killing of animals. But Japa is free from such injury, and hence the best.

[25] A class of demigods regarded as the musicians of gods.

[26] Uccaiḥśravas and Airāvata are respectively the divine horse and elephant of Indra.

[27] *Vāda*: discussion with open-mindedness, with a view to determining true purport; *Jalpa*: pointless debate; *Vitaṇḍā*: wrangling discussion. [*Jalpa* is that mode of debate by which both parties establish their own viewpoint through direct and indirect proofs, and refute the view of the opponent through circumvention (*Chala*) and false generalization (*Jāti*) and by pointing out unfitness (of the opponent) to be argued with (*Nigraha-sthāna*). But where one party establishes his viewpoint, and the other refutes it through circumvention, false generalization and showing the unfitness of the opponent to be argued with, without establishing his own views, that is termed *Vitaṇḍā*. *Jalpa* and *Vitaṇḍā* result only in a trial of strength between the opponents, who are both desirous of victory. But the result of *Vāda* is the ascertainment of truth between the teacher and the disciple or between others, both unbiased.—Gloss of Śrīdhara Swāmī on this verse.]—Tr.

[28] *Dvandva*: A compound of two or more words which, if not compounded, would stand in the same case and be connected by the conjunction 'and'.—Tr.

[29] *Nārīṇām* may mean 'of the feminine qualities'. According to Śrīdhara Swāmī and Ś., the words *fame* etc. signify the goddesses of the respective qualities. According to M.S. these seven goddesses are the wives of the god Dharma.—Tr.

[30] Here Aṣṭ. adds: *tatra yaḥ prāṇa-haraḥ saḥ (sarva-haraḥ ucyate)*—Among them, that which destroys life (is called *sarva-haraḥ*).—Tr.

[31] Some translate this as ‘the splendour of the splendid’.—Tr.

[32] Some translate this as ‘the victory of the victorious’.—Tr.

[33] The result of *sattva*, viz. virtue, knowledge, detachment, etc.

[34] The clan to which Śrī Kṛṣṇa belonged, known otherwise as the Yādavas.

[35] Here Aṣṭ. adds *yādavānām*, of the Yādavas.—Tr.

[36] All living beings.

[37] The Universe is called a *foot* of His by virtue of His having the limiting adjunct of being its efficient and material cause.

[38] As the material and the efficient cause of all things.

[39] A Form constituted by the whole of creation has been presented in this chapter for meditation. Thereby the unqualified transcendental Reality, implied by the word *tat* (in *tattvamasi*) and referred to by the latter portion of the Commentator’s quotation (viz. *tripādasyāmṛtam divi*: The immortal three-*footed* One is established in His own effulgence), becomes established.

CHAPTER 11

REVELATION OF THE COSMIC FORM

The divine manifestations of the Lord have been stated. And in that connection, after having heard what was said by the Lord, 'I remain sustaining this whole creation in a special way by a part (or Myself),' (now) wishing to directly see that primal form of God manifested as the Universe,

Arjuna said:

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम्।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम॥१॥

1. This delusion of mine has departed as a result of that speech which is most secret and known as pertaining to the Self, and which was uttered by You for my benefit.

Ayam, this; *mohaḥ*, delusion; *mama*, of mine; *vigataḥ*, has departed, that is, my non-discriminating idea has been removed; *tena*, as a result of that; *vacaḥ*, speech of Yours; which is *paramam*, most, supremely; *guhyam*, secret; and *adhyātma-sanjñitam*, known as pertaining to the Self—dealing with discrimination between the Self and the non-Self; and *yat*, which; was *uktam*, uttered; *tvayā*, by You; *madanugrahāya*, for my benefit, out of favour for me.

Further,

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम्॥२॥

2. O you with eyes like lotus leaves, the origin and dissolution of beings have been heard by me in detail from You. (40) And (Your) undecaying glory, too, (has been heard).

Kamala-partrākṣa, O You with eyes like lotus leaves; *bhava-apyayau*, the origin and dissolution—these two; *bhūtānām*, of beings; *śrutau*, have been heard; *mayā*, by me; *vistaraśaḥ*, in detail—not in brief; *tvattaḥ*, from

You. *Ca*, and; (Your) *avyayam*, undecaying; *māhātmyam*, glory, too;—*has been heard*—(these last words) remain understood.

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम॥३॥

3. O supreme Lord, so it is, as You speak about Yourself. O supreme Person, I wish to see the divine form of Yours.

Parama-īśvara, O supreme Lord; *evam*, so; *etat*, it is—not otherwise; *yathā*, as; *tvam*, You; *āttha*, speak; *ātmānam*, about Yourself. Still, *puruṣottama*, O supreme Person; *icchāmi*, I wish; *draṣṭum*, to see; the *aiśvaram*, divine; *rūpam*, form; *te*, of Yours, of Viṣṇu, endowed with Knowledge, Sovereignty, Power, Strength, Valour and Formidability.

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम्॥४॥

4. O Lord, if You think that it is possible to be seen by me, then, O Lord of Yoga, You show me Your eternal Self.

Prabho, O Lord, Master; *yadi*, if; *manyase*, You think; *iti*, that; *tat śakyam*, it is possible; *draṣṭum*, to be seen; *mayā*, by me, by Arjuna; *tataḥ*, then, since I am very eager to see, therefore; *yogeśwara*, O Lord of Yoga, of yogīs—Yoga stands for yogīs; their Lord is *yogeśwara*; *tvam*, You; *darśaya*, show; *me*, me, for my sake; *ātmānam avyayam*, Your eternal Self.

Being thus implored by Arjuna,

The Blessed Lord said:

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च॥५॥

5. O son of Pṛthā, behold My forms in (their) hundreds and in thousands, of different kinds, celestial, and of various colours and shapes.

O son of Pṛthā, *paśya*, behold; *me*, My; *rūpāṇi*, forms; *śataśaḥ*, in (their) hundreds; *atha*, and; *sahasraśaḥ*, in thousands, that is in large numbers. And they are *nānā-vidhāni*, of different kinds; *divyāni*, celestial,

supernatural; and *nānā-varṇa-ākṛtīni*, of various colours and shapes—forms which have different (*nānā*) colours (*varṇa*) such as blue, yellow, etc. as also (different) shapes (*ākṛtayaḥ*), having their parts differently arranged.

पश्यादित्यान्वसून् रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत॥६॥

6. See the Adityas, the Vasūs, the Rudras, the two Aśvins and the Maruts. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, behold also the many wonders not seen before.

Paśya, see; *ādityān*, the twelve Adityas; *vasūn*, the eight Vasus; *rudrān*, the eleven Rudras; *aśvinau*, the two Aśvins; and *marutaḥ*, the Maruts, who are divided into seven groups of seven each. *Bhārata*, O scion of the Bharata dynasty; *paśya*, behold; *tathā*, also; *bahūni*, the many other; *āścaryāṇi*, wonders; *adṛṣṭapūrvāṇi*, not seen before—by you or anyone else in the human world.

Not only this much,—

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम्।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि॥७॥

7. See now, O Guḍākeśa (Arjuna), the entire Universe together with the moving and the non-moving, concentrated at the same place here in My body, as also whatever else you would like to see.

Paśya, see; *adya*, now; O Guḍākeśa, the *kṛtsnam*, entire; *jagat*, Universe; *sa-cara-acaram*, existing together with the moving and the nonmoving; *ekastham*, concentrated at the same place; *iha*, here; *mama dehe*, in My body; *ca*, as also; *yat anyat*, whatever else—even those victory, defeat, etc. with regard to which you expressed doubt in, ‘whether we shall win, or whether they shall conquer us’ (2.6); if *icchasi*, you would like; *draṣṭum*, to see them.

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम्॥८॥

8. But you are not able to see Me merely with this eye of yours. I grant you the supernatural eye; behold My divine Yoga.

Tu, but; *na śakyase*, you are not able; *draṣṭum*, to see; *mām*, Me, who have assumed the Cosmic form; *eva*, merely; *anena*, with this natural; *sva-cakṣuṣā*, eye of yours. However, *dadāmi*, I grant; *te*, you; the *divyam*, supernatural; *cakṣuḥ*, eye, by which supernatural eye you shall be able to see. *Paśya*, behold with that; *me*, My, God's; *aiśvaram*, divine; *yogam*, Yoga, that is the superabundance of the power of Yoga. [41]

Sañjaya said:

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन् महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ९ ॥

9. O King, having spoken thus, thereafter, Hari [42](Kṛṣṇa) the great Master of Yoga, showed to the son of Pṛthā the supreme divine form:

Rājan, O King, Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *uktvā*, having spoken *evam*, thus, in the manner stated above; *tataḥ*, thereafter; *hariḥ*, Hari, Nārāyaṇa; *mahā-yogeśwaraḥ*, the great Master of Yoga—who is great (*mahān*) and also the master (*īśvara*) of Yoga; *darśayāmāsa* showed; *pārthāya*, to the son of Pṛthā; the *paramam*, supreme; *aiśvaram*, divine; *rūpam*, form, the Cosmic form:

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥

10. Having many faces and eyes, possessing many wonderful sights, adorned with numerous celestial ornaments, holding many uplifted heavenly weapons;

A form *aneka-vaktra-nayanam*, having many faces and eyes; *aneka-adbhuta-darśanam*, possessing many wonderful sights; as also *aneka-divya-ābharaṇam*, adorned with numerous celestial ornaments; and *divya-aneka-udyata-āyudham*, holding many uplifted heavenly weapons. This whole portion is connected with the verb '(He) showed' in the earlier verse.

Moreover,

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम्।
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम॥११॥

11. Wearing heavenly garlands and apparel, anointed with heavenly scents, abounding in all kinds of wonder, resplendent, infinite, and with faces everywhere.

Divya-mālya-ambara-dharam, wearing heavenly garlands and apparel—the God wearing celestial flowers and clothing; *divya-gandha-anulepanam*, anointed with heavenly scents; *sarva-āścaryamayam*, abounding in all kinds of wonder; *devam*, resplendent; *anantam*, infinite, boundless; and *viśvato-mukham*, with faces everywhere—He being the Self of all beings. 'He showed (to Arjuna)', or 'Arjuna saw', is to be supplied.

An illustration is once more being given of the effulgence of the Cosmic form of the Lord:

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता।
यदि भा: सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मन:॥१२॥

12. Should the effulgence of a thousand suns blaze forth simultaneously in the sky, that might be similar to the radiance of that exalted One.

Should the *bhāḥ*, effulgence; *sūrya-sahasrasya*, of a thousand suns; *utthitā bhavet*, blaze forth; *yugapat*, simultaneously; *divi*, in the sky, or in heaven which is the third as counted (from this earth); *sā*, that; *yadi syāt*, might be—or it might not be—; *sadṛśī*, similar; to the *bhāsaḥ*, radiance; *tasya*, of that; *mahāt-manaḥ*, exalted One, the Cosmic Person Himself. The idea is that the brilliance of the Cosmic Person surely excels even this!

Further,

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा॥१३॥

13. At that time, Pāṇḍava saw there, in the body of the God of gods, the whole diversely differentiated Universe united in the one (Cosmic form).

Tadā, at that time; *pāṇḍavaḥ*, Pāṇḍava, Arjuna; *apaśyat*, saw; *tatra*, there, in that Cosmic form; *śarīre*, in the body; *devadevasya*, of the God of

gods, of Hari; *kṛtsnam*, the whole; *jagat*, Universe; *anekadhā*, diversely; *pravibhaktam*, differentiated—into groups of gods, manes, human beings, and others; *ekastham*, united in the one (Cosmic form).

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत॥१४॥

14. Then, filled with wonder, with hairs standing on end, he, Dhanañjaya, (Arjuna), bowing down with his head to the Lord, said with folded hands:

Tataḥ, then, having seen Him; *saḥ*, he, Dhanañjaya; became *vismaya-āviṣṭaḥ*, filled with wonder; and *hṛṣṭa-romā*, had his hairs standing on end. Becoming filled with humility, *praṇamya*, bowing down, bowing down fully; (43) *śirasā*, with his head; *devam*, to the Lord, who had assumed the Cosmic form; *abhāṣata*, he said; *kṛta-añjaliḥ*, with folded hands, with palms joined in salutation:

How? 'I am seeing the Cosmic form that has been revealed by You'—thus expressing his own experience,

Arjuna said:

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे
सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान्।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थ-
मृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान्॥१५॥

15. O God, I see in Your body all the gods as also hosts of (various) classes of beings; Brahmā the ruler, sitting on a lotus seat, and all the heavenly sages and serpents.

Deva, O God; *paśyāmi*, I see, perceive; *tava dehe*, in Your body; *sarvān*, all; the *devān*, gods; *tathā*, as also; *bhūta-viśeṣa-saṅghān*, hosts of (various) classes of beings, groups of moving and non-moving living things having different shapes; and besides, *brahmāṇam*, Brahmā, with four faces; *īśam*, the Ruler of creatures; *kamalāsana-stham*, sitting on a lotus seat, that is sitting on Mount Meru which forms the pericarp of the lotus that is the

earth; and *sarvān*, all; the *divyān*, heavenly; *ṛṣīn*, sages—Vasiṣṭha and others; and (the heavenly) *uragān*, serpents—Vasuki and others.

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं
पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम्।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं
पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप॥१६॥

16. I see You as possessed of numerous arms, bellies, mouths and eyes; as having infinite forms all around. O Lord of the Universe, O Cosmic Person, I see not Your limit nor the middle, nor again the beginning!

Paśyāmi, I see; *tvām*, You; *aneka-bāhu-udara-vaktra-netram*, as possessed of numerous arms, bellies, mouths and eyes; *ananta-rūpam*, having infinite forms; *sarvataḥ*, all around. *Viśveśwara*, O Lord of the Universe; *viśva-rūpa*, O Cosmic Person; *na paśyāmi*, I see not; (44) *tava*, Your; *antam*, end; *na madhyam*, nor the middle—what lies between two extremities; *na punaḥ*, nor again; the *ādim*, beginning—I see not the limit (end) nor the middle, nor again the beginning, of You who are God!

Furthermore,

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च
तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्-
दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम्॥१७॥

17. I see You as wearing a diadem, wielding a mace, and holding a disc; a mass of brilliance glowing all around, difficult to look at from all sides, possessed of the radiance of the blazing fire and sun, and immeasurable.

Paśyāmi, I see; *tvām*, You; as *kirīṭinam*, wearing a diadem—*kirīṭa* is a kind of decoration for the head; one having it is *kirīṭī*; *gadinam*, wielding a mace; and also *cakriṇam*, holding a disc; *tejorāśim*, a mass of brilliance; *sarvataḥ dīptimantam*, glowing all around; *durnirīkṣyam*, difficult to look at; *samantāt*, from all sides, at every point; as though *dīpta-anala-arka-dyutim*, possessed of the radiance (*dyuti*) of the blazing (*dīpta*) fire (*anala*) and sun (*arka*); and *aprameyam*, immeasurable, that is beyond limitation.

‘For this reason also, i.e., by seeing Your power of Yoga, I infer’ that—

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं
त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम्।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता
सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे॥१८॥

18. You are the Immutable, the supreme One to be known; You are the most perfect repository of this Universe. You are the Imperishable, the Protector of the ever-existing religion; You are the eternal Person. This is my belief.

Tvam, You; are the *akṣaram*, Immutable; the *paramam*, supreme One, Brahman; *veditavyam*, to be known—by those aspiring for Liberation. You are the *param*, most perfect; *nidhānam*, repository—where things are deposited, that is the ultimate resort; *asya viśvasya*, of this Universe, of the entire creation. Further. You are the *avyayaḥ*, Imperishable—there is no decay in You; the *śāśvata-dharma-goptā*, Protector (*goptā*) of the ever-existing (*śāśvata*) religion (*dharma*). You are the *sanātanaḥ*, eternal; transcendental *puruṣaḥ*, Person. This is *me*, my; *mataḥ*, belief—what is meant by me.

Moreover,

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्य-
मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं
स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम्॥१९॥

19. I see You as without beginning, middle and end, possessed of infinite valour, having innumerable arms, having the sun and the moon as eyes, having a mouth like a blazing fire, and heating up this Universe by Your own brilliance.

Paśyāmi, I see; *tvām*, You; as *anādi-madhya-antam*, without beginning, middle and end; *ananta-vīryam*, possessed of infinite valour; and also *ananta-bāhum*, having innumerable arms; *śaśi-sūrya-netram*, having the sun and the moon as the eyes; *dīpta-hutāśa-vaktram*, having a mouth like a

blazing fire; *tapantam*, heating up; *idam*, this; *viśvam*, Universe; *sva-tejasā*, by Your own brilliance.

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि
व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः।
दृष्ट्वाऽद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं
लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन्॥२०॥

20. Indeed, this intermediate space between heaven and earth as also all the directions are pervaded by You alone. O exalted One, the three worlds are struck with fear by seeing this strange, fearful form of Yours.

Hi, indeed; *idam*, this; *antaram*, intermediate space; *dyāvāpṛthivyoḥ*, between heaven and earth; *ca*, as also; *sarvāḥ*, all; the *diśaḥ*, directions; *vyāptam*, are pervaded; *tvayā*, by You; *ekena*, alone, who have assumed the Cosmic form. *Mahātman*, O exalted One, who by nature are high-minded; the *lokatrayam*, three worlds; *pravyathitam*, are struck with fear, or are perturbed; *dṛṣṭvā*, by seeing; *idam*, this; *abdhutam*, strange, astonishing; *ugram*, fearful, terrible; *rūpam*, form; *tava*, of Yours.

Thereafter, now, in order to clear that doubt which Arjuna earlier had—as in, 'whether we shall win, or whether they shall conquer' (2.6)—, the Lord proceeds with the idea,
'I shall show the inevitable victory of the Pāṇḍavas.' Visualizing that, Arjuna said: 'Moreover—'

अमी हि त्वां सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति
केचिद्भीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः
स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः॥२१॥

21. Those very groups of gods enter into You; struck with fear, some extol (You) with joined palms. Groups of great sages and perfected beings praise You with elaborate hymns, saying 'May it be well!'

Amī hi, those very; *sura-saṅghāḥ*, groups of gods, the soldiers engaged in *battle*—groups of gods such as the Vasus who have descended here in the form of human beings for eliminating the burden of the earth; *viśanti*, enter

—are seen to be entering; *tvām*, You. *Bhītāḥ*, struck with fear, and unable to flee; *kecit*, some among them; *gṛṇanti*, extol You; *prañjalayaḥ*, with their palms joined. *Maharṣi-siddha (45)-saṅghāḥ*, groups of great sages and perfected beings; seeing portents foreboding evil, etc. as the battle became imminent; *stuvanti*, praise; *tvām*, You; *puṣkalābhiḥ*, with elaborate, full; *stutibhiḥ*, hymns; *uktvā*, saying; '*svasti iti*, May it be well!'

And further,

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या
विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च।
गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा
वीक्षन्ते त्वा विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे॥२२॥

22. Those who are the Rudras, the Adityas, the Vasus and the Sādhyas (46), the Viśve(-devas), the two Aśvins, the Maruts and the Ūṣmapas, and hosts of Gandharvas, Yakṣas, demons and Siddhas—all of those very ones gaze at You, being indeed struck with wonder.

Ye, those who are; the *rudra-ādityāḥ*, Rudras and Ādityas; *vasavaḥ*, the Vasus; and *sādhyāḥ*, the Sādhyas—the groups of Rudras and other gods; the gods *viśve*, Viśve-devas; and *aśvinau*, the two Aśvins; *marutaḥ*, the Maruts; and *ūśmapāḥ*, the Ūśmapas, (a class of) manes; and *gandharva-yakṣa-asura-siddha-saṅghāḥ*, hosts of Gandharvas—viz. Hāhā, Hūhū and others—, Yakṣas—viz. Kubera and others—, demons—Virocana and others—, and Siddhas—Kapila and others; *sarve eva*, all of those very ones; *vīkṣante*, gaze; *tvā*, (that is) *tvām*, at You; *vismitāḥ eva*, being indeed struck with wonder.

For,

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं
महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम्।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं
दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम्॥२३॥

23. O mighty-armed One, seeing Your immense form with many mouths and eyes, having numerous arms, thighs and feet, with many bellies,

and fearful with many teeth, the creatures are struck with terror, and so am I.

Mahābāho, O mighty-armed One; *dṛṣṭvā*, seeing; *te*, Your; *mahat*, immense, very vast; *rūpam*, form of this kind; *bahu-vaktra-netram*, with many mouths and eyes; *bahu-bāhu-ūru-pādam*, having many arms, thighs and feet; and further, *bahu-udaram*, with many bellies; and *bahu-daṁṣṭrā-karālam*, fearful with many teeth; *lokāḥ*, the creatures in the world; are *pravyathitāḥ*, struck with terror; *tathā*, and so also; am even *aham*, I.

The reason of that is this:

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं
व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम्।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा
धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो॥२४॥

24. O Viṣṇu, verily, seeing Your form touching heaven, blazing, with many colours, open-mouthed, with fiery large eyes, I, becoming terrified in my mind, do not find steadiness and peace.

O Viṣṇu, *hi*, verily; *dṛṣṭvā*, seeing; *tvām*, You; *nabhaḥ-spṛśam*, touching heaven; *dīptam*, blazing; *aneka-varṇam*, with many colours, (that is) possessed of many frightening forms; *vyātta-ānanam*, open-mouthed; *dīpta-viśāla-netram*, with fiery large eyes; I, *pravyathita-antara-ātmā*, becoming terrified in my mind; *na vindāmi*, do not find; *dhṛtim*, steadiness; *ca*, and; *śamam*, peace, calmness of mind.

Why?

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास॥२५॥

25. Having merely seen Your mouths made terrible with (their) teeth and resembling the fire of Dissolution, I have lost the sense of direction and find no comfort. Be gracious, O Lord of gods, O Abode of the Universe.

Dṛṣṭvā eva, having merely seen; *te*, Your; *mukhāni*, mouths; *daṁṣṭrā-karālāni*, made terrible with (their) teeth; and *kāla-anala-sannibhāni*, resembling the fire of Dissolution—the fire that burns the worlds at the time of Dissolution is *kālānala*; similar to that; *na jāne*, I have lost; the sense of *diśaḥ*, direction—I do not know the directions as to which is East or which is West; and hence, *na labhe*, find no; *śarma*, comfort. Therefore, *prasīda*, be gracious; *deveśa*, O Lord of gods; *jagannivāsa*, O Abode of the Universe!

'The apprehension which was there of my getting defeated by those others, that too has cleared away, since—'

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः
सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ
सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः॥२६॥

26. And into You (enter) all those sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra along with multitudes of the rulers of the earth; (also) Bhīṣma, Droṇa and that son of a Sūta (Karṇa), together with even our prominent warriors.

Ca, and; *tvām*, into You—this is to be connected with 'rapidly enter' in the next verse; *sarve*, all; *amī*, those; *putrāḥ*, sons—Duryodhana and others; *dhṛtarāṣṭrasya*, of Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *saha*, along with; *avanipāla-saṅghaiḥ*, multitudes of the rulers (*pāla*) of the earth (*avani*); also Bhīṣma, Droṇa, *tathā*, and; *asau*, that; *sūta-putraḥ*, son of a Sūta, Karṇa; *saha*, together with; *api*, even; *asmadīyaiḥ*, our; *yodha-mukhyaiḥ*, prominent warriors, the commanders—Dhṛṣṭadyumna and others.

Moreover,

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति
दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु
संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः॥२७॥

27. They rapidly enter into Your terrible mouths with cruel teeth! Some are seen sticking in the gaps between the teeth, with their heads crushed!

Viśanti, they enter; *tvarmāṇāḥ*, rapidly, in great haste; into *te*, Your; *vaktrāṇi*, mouths;—what kind of mouths?—*bhayānakāni*, terrible; *daṁṣṭrā-karālāni*, with cruel teeth. Besides, among those who have entered the mouths, *kecit*, some; *saṁdṛśyante*, are seen; *vilagnā*, sticking, like meat eaten; *daśanāntareṣu*, in the gaps between the teeth; *uttamāṅgaiḥ*, with their heads; *cūrṇitaiḥ*, crushed.

As to how they enter, he says:

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः
समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा
विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति॥२८॥

28. As the numerous currents of the waters of rivers rush towards the sea alone so also do those heroes of the human world enter into Your blazing mouths.

Yathā, as; the *bahavaḥ*, numerous; *ambu-vegāḥ*, currents of the waters, particularly the swift ones; *nadīnām*, of flowing rivers; *dravanti abhimukhāḥ*, rush towards, enter into; the *samudram*, sea; *eva*, alone; *tathā*, so also; do *amī*, those; *nara-loka-vīrāḥ*, heroes of the human world—Bhīṣma and others; *viśanti*, enter into; *tava*, Your; *abhi-vijvalanti*, blazing, glowing; *vaktrāṇi*, mouths.

Why do they enter, and how? In answer Arjuna says:

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा
विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोका-
स्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः॥२९॥

29. As moths enter with increased haste into a glowing fire for destruction, in that very way do the creatures enter into Your mouths too, with increased hurry for destruction.

Yathā, as; *pataṅgāḥ*, moths, flying insects; *viśanti*, enter; *samṛddha-vegāḥ*, with increased haste; into a *pradīptam*, glowing; *jvalanam*, fire; *nāśāya*, for destruction; *tathā eva*, in that very way; do the *lokāḥ*, creatures;

viśanti, enter into; *tava*, Your; *vaktrāṇi*, mouths; *api*, too; *samṛddha-vegāḥ*, with increased hurry; *nāśāya*, for destruction.

You, again—

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ता-
ल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं
भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो॥३०॥

30. You lick Your lips while devouring all the creatures from every side with flaming mouths which are completely filling the entire world with heat. O Viṣṇu, Your fierce rays are scorching. (47)

Lelihyase, You lick Your lips, You taste; *grasamānaḥ*, while devouring, while taking in; *samagrān*, all; *lokān*, the creatures; *samantāt*, from all sides; *jvaladbhiḥ*, with flaming; *vadanaiḥ*, mouths; which are *āpūrya*, completely filling; *samagram*, the whole—together (*saha*) with the foremost (*agreṇa*); *jagat*, world; *tejobhiḥ*, with heat. Moreover, O Viṣṇu, the all-pervading One, *tava*, Your; *ugrāḥ*, fierce; *bhāsaḥ*, rays; are *pratapanti*, scorching.

Since You are of such a terrible nature, therefore—

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो
नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम्॥३१॥

31. Tell me who You are, fierce in form. Salutation be to you, O supreme God; be gracious. I desire to fully know You who are the Primal One. For I do not understand Your actions!

Ākhyāhi, tell; *me*, me; *kaḥ*, who; *bhavān*, You are; *ugrarūpaḥ*, fierce in form. *Namaḥ*, salutation; *astu*, be; *te*, to You; *deva-vara*, O supreme God, foremost among the gods. *Prasīda*, be gracious. *Icchāmi*, I desire; *vijñātum*, to fully know; *bhavantam*, You; *ādyam*, who are the Primal One, who exist in the beginning. *Hi*, for; *na prajānāmi*, I do not understand; *tava*, Your; *pravṛttim*, actions!

The Blessed Lord said:

> **कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो**
> **लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः।**
> **ऋतेऽपि त्वा न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे**
> **येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः॥३२॥**

32. I am the world-destroying Time, (48) grown in stature (49) and now engaged in annihilating the creatures. Even without you, all the warriors who are arrayed in the confronting armies will cease to exist!

Asmi, I am; the *loka-kṣaya-kṛt*, world-destroying; *kālaḥ*, Time; *pravṛddhaḥ*, grown in stature. Hear the purpose for which I have grown in stature: I am *iha*, now; *pravṛttaḥ*, engaged; *samāhartum*, in annihilating; *lokān*, the creatures. *Api*, even; *ṛte tvā*, without you; *sarve*, all—from whom your apprehension had arisen; the *yodhāḥ*, warriors—Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa and others; *ye*, who are; *avasthitāḥ*, arrayed; *pratyanīkeṣu*, in the confronting armies—in every unit of the army confronting the other; *na bhaviṣyanti*, will cease to exist.

Since this is so—

> **तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व**
> **जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम्।**
> **मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव**
> **निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन्॥३३॥**

33. Therefore you rise up, (and) gain fame; and defeating the enemies, enjoy a prosperous kingdom. These have been killed verily by Me even earlier; be you merely an instrument, O Savyasācin (Arjuna).

Tasmāt, therefore; *tvam*, you; *uttiṣṭha*, rise up; (and) *labhasva*, gain; the *yaśaḥ*, fame, that Arjuna has conquered the *Atirathas*, (50) Bhīṣma, Droṇa and others, who are unconquerable even by the gods. Such fame can be acquired only by virtuous actions. *Jitvā*, by defeating; *śatrūn*, the enemies, Duryodhana and others; *bhunkṣva*, enjoy; a *rājyam*, kingdom; that is *samṛddham*, prosperous, free from enemies and obstacles. *Ete*, these; *nihatāḥ*, have been definitely killed, made lifeless; *eva mayā*, verily by Me;

eva pūrvam, even earlier. *Bhava,* be you; *nimitta-mātram,* merely an instrument, O Savyasāchin. Arjuna was called so because he could shoot arrows even with his left hand.

द्रोणञ्च भीष्मञ्च जयद्रथञ्च
कर्णं तथाऽन्यानपि योधवीरान्।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान्॥३४॥

34. You destroy Droṇa and Bhīṣma, and Jayadratha and Karṇa as also the other heroic warriors who have been killed by Me. Do not be afraid. Fight! You shall conquer the enemies in battle.

By saying, 'who have been killed by Me,' the Lord names Droṇa and those very warriors with regard to whom Arjuna had (his) doubts.

Now then, uncertainty with regard to Droṇa and Bhīṣma is well-founded. Droṇa was the teacher of the science of archery, and was equipped with heavenly weapons; and particularly, he was his (Arjuna's) own teacher and most respected. Bhīṣma was destined to die at will, and possessed heavenly weapons. He fought a duel with Paraśurāma and remained unvanquished. So also Jayadratha—whose father was performing an austerity with the idea that anyone who made his son's head fall on the ground would have even his own head fall. Since Karṇa also was equipped with an unerring spear given by Indra, and was a son of the Sun, born of a maiden (Kuntī), therefore he is referred to by his own name itself.

As a mere instrument, *tvam*, you; *jahi*, destroy them; who have been *hatān*, killed; *mayā*, by Me. *Mā,* do not; *vyathiṣṭhāḥ,* be afraid of them. *Yuddhyasva,* fight. *Jetāsi,* you shall conquer; the *sapatnān,* enemies—Duryodhana and others; *raṇe,* in battle.

Sañjaya said:

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य
कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं
सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य॥३५॥

35. Hearing this utterance of Keśava, Kirīṭī (Arjuna), with joined palms and trembling, prostrating himself, said again to Kṛṣṇa with a faltering voice, bowing down overcome by fits of fear:

Śrutvā, hearing; *etat*, this, aforesaid; *vacanam*, utterance; *keśavasya*, of Keśava; Kirīṭī, *kṛtāñjaliḥ*, with joined palms; and *vepamānaḥ*, trembling; *namaskṛtvā*, prostrating himself; *āha*, said; *bhūyaḥ eva*, again; *kṛṣṇam*, to Kṛṣṇa; *sa-gadgadam*, with a faltering voice—.

A person's throat becomes choked with phlegm and his eyes full of tears when, on being struck with fear, he is overcome by sorrow, and when, on being overwhelmed with affection, he is filled with joy. The indistinctness and feebleness of sound in speech that follows as a result is what is called faltering (*gadgada*). A speech that is accompanied with (*saha*) this is *sa-gadgadam*. It is used adverbially to the act of utterance.

Praṇamya, bowing down with humility; *bhīta-bhītaḥ*, overcome by fits of fear, with his mind struck again and again with fear—this is to be connected with the remote word *āha* (said).

At this juncture the words of Sañjaya have a purpose in view. How? It is thus: Thinking that the helpless Duryodhana will be as good as dead when the four unconquerable ones, viz. Droṇa and others, are killed, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, losing hope of victory, would conclude a treaty. From that will follow peace on either side. Under the influence of fate, Dhṛtarāṣṭra did not even listen to that!

Arjuna said

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या
जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति
सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः॥३६॥

36. It is proper, O Hṛṣīkeśa, that the world becomes delighted and attracted by Your praise; that the Rākṣasas, stricken with fear, run in all directions; and that all the groups of the Siddhas bow down (to You).

Sthāne, it is proper;—what is that?—that the *jagat*, world; *prahṛṣyati*, becomes delighted; *tava prakīrtyā*, by Your praise, by reciting Your greatness and hearing it. This is befitting. This is the idea. Or, the word *sthāne* may be taken as qualifying the word 'subject' (understood) : It is proper that the Lord is the subject of joy etc. since the Lord is the Self of all beings and the Friend of all.

So also it (the world) *anurajyate*, becomes attracted, becomes drawn (by that praise). That also is with regard to a proper subject. This is how it is to be explained.

Further, that the *rakṣāṁsi*, Rākṣasas; *bhītāni*, stricken with fear; *dravanti*, run; *diśaḥ*, in all directions—that also is with regard to a proper subject. And that *sarve*, all; the *siddha-saṅghāḥ*, groups of the Siddhas—Kapila and others; *namasyanti*, bow down—that also is befitting.

He points out the reason for the Lord's being the object of delight etc.:

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन्
गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास
त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत्॥३७॥

37. And why should they not bow down to You, O exalted (51) One, who are greater (than all) and who are the first Creator even of Brahmā! O infinite One, supreme God, Abode of the Universe, You are the Immutable, being and non-being, (and) that which is Transcendental.

Ca, and; since You are the Primal Creator, the Cause, *api*, even; *brahmaṅaḥ*, of Brahmā, of Hiraṇyagarbha; therefore, *kasmāt*, why, for what reason; should they *na nameran*, not bow down; *te*, to You; *mahātman*, O exalted One; *garīyase*, who are greater (than all)! Hence, why should these not bow down *ādi-kartre*, to the first Creator? Therefore You are fit for, that is the fit object of, delight etc. and salutation as well.

Ananta, O infinite One; *deveśa*, supreme God; *jagannivāsa*, Abode of the Universe; *tvam*, You; are the *akṣaram*, Immutable; *tat param yat*, that which is Transcendental, which is heard of in the Upaniṣads;—what is that?—*sad-asat*, being and non-being. Being is that which exists, and non-being

is that with regard to which the idea of non-existence arises. (You are) that Immutable of which these two—being and non-being—become the limiting adjuncts; which (Immutable), as a result, is metaphorically referred to as being and non-being. But in reality that Immutable is transcendental to being and non-being. 'That Immutable which the knowers of the Vedas declare' (8.11; cf. Ka. 1.2.15)—that is You Yourself, nothing else. This is the idea.

He praises again:

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-
स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम्।
वेत्ताऽसि वेद्यं च परं च धाम
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप॥३८॥

38. You are the primal Deity, the ancient Person; You are the supreme Resort of this world. You are the knower as also the object of knowledge, and the supreme Abode. O You of infinite forms, the Universe is pervaded by You!

You are the *ādi-devaḥ*, primal Deity, because of being the creator of the Universe; the *purāṇaḥ*, ancient, eternal; *puruṣaḥ*, Person—(derived) in the sense of 'staying in the town (*pura*) that is the body'. You verily are the *param*, supreme; *nidhānam*, Resort, in which this entire Universe comes to rest at the time of final dissolution etc. Besides, You are the *vettā*, knower of all things to be known. You are also the *vedyam*, object of knowledge—that which is fit to be known; and the *param*, supreme; *dhāma*, Abode, the supreme State of Viṣṇu. *Anantarūpa*, O You of infinite forms, who have no limit to Your own forms; the entire *viśvam*, Universe; *tatam*, is pervaded; *tvayā*, by You.

Further,

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः
प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः
पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते॥३९॥

39. You are Air, Death, Fire, the god of the waters, the moon, the Lord of the creatures, and the Great-grandfather. Salutations! Salutation be to You a thousand times; salutation to You again and again! Salutation!

You are *vāyuḥ*, Air; *yamaḥ*, Death; and *agniḥ*, Fire; *varuṇaḥ*, the god of the waters; *śaśāṅkaḥ*, the moon; *prajāpatiḥ*, the Lord of the creatures—Kaśyapa and others; (52) and *pra-pitāmahaḥ*, the Great-grandfather, i.e. the Father ever of Brahmā (Hiraṇyagarbha). *Namo*, salutations; *namaḥ*, salutation; *astu*, be; *te*, to You; *sahasra-kṛtvaḥ*, a thousand times. *Punaḥ ca bhūyaḥ api namo te*, salutation to You again and again; *namaḥ*, salutation!

The suffix *kṛtvasuc* (after *sahasra*) indicates performance and repetition of the act of salutation a number of times. The words *punaḥ ca bhūyaḥ api* (again and again) indicate his own dissatisfaction (53) owing to abundance of reverence and devotion.

So also,

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते
नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व।
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं
सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः॥४०॥

40. Salutation to You in the East and behind. Salutation be to You on all sides in deed, O All! You are possessed of infinite strength and infinite heroism. You pervade everything; hence You are all!

Namaḥ, salutation to You; *purastāt*, in the East; *atha*, and; even *pṛṣṭhataḥ*, behind. Salutation be *sarvataḥ*, on all sides; *eva*, indeed; *te*, to You who exist everywhere; *sarva*, O All! *Tvam*, You; are *ananta-vīrya-amita-vikramaḥ*, possessed of infinite strength and infinite heroism. *Vīrya* is strength, and *vikramaḥ* is heroism. Someone though possessing strength for the use of weapons etc. (54) may lack heroism or have little heroism. But You are possessed of infinite strength and infinite heroism.

Samāpnoṣi, You pervade, interpenetrate; *sarvam*, everything, the whole Universe, by Your single Self. *Tataḥ*, hence; *asi*, You are; *sarvaḥ*, All, that is, no entity exists without You.

‘Since I am guilty of not knowing Your greatness, therefore,’—

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं
हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं
मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि॥४१॥

41. Without knowing this greatness of Yours, whatever was said by me (to You) rashly, through inadvertence or even out of intimacy, thinking (You to be) a friend, addressing (You) as ‘O Kṛṣṇa,’ ‘O Yadava,’ ‘O friend,’ etc. —.

Like a fool, *ajānatā*, without knowing—. Not knowing what? In answer he says: *idam*, this; *mahimānam*, greatness—the Cosmic form; *tava*, of Yours, of God; *yat*, whatever; *uktam*, was said; *mayā*, by me (to You); *prasabham*, rashly, slightingly; *pramādāt*, through inadvertence, being in a distracted state of mind; *vā api*, or even; *praṇayena*, out of intimacy—intimacy is the familiarity arising out of love; whatever I have said because of that reason; erroneously *matvā*, thinking (You); *sakhā iti*, to be a friend, of the same age; *iti*, addressing You as, ‘O Kṛṣṇa,’ ‘O Yādava,’ ‘O friend,’—.

In the clause, ‘*tava idam mahimānam, ajānatā*, without knowing this greatness of Yours,’ *idam* (this) (in the neuter gender) is connected with *mahimānam* (greatness) (in masculine gender) by a change of gender. If the reading be *tava imam*, then both the words would be in the same gender.

यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि
विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं
तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम्॥४२॥

42. And that You have been discourteously treated out of fun—while walking, while on a bed, while on a seat, while eating, in privacy, or, O Acyuta, even in public, for that I beg pardon of You, the incomprehensible One.

And, *yat*, that; *asi*, You have been; *asatkṛtaḥ*, discourteously treated, slighted; *avahāsa-artham*, out of fun, with a veiw to mocking;—where?—in these, Acyuta, viz. *vihāra-śayyā-āsana-bhojaneṣu*, while walking, (55) while on a bed, while on a seat, and while eating;—that You have been insulted *ekaḥ*, in privacy, in the absence of others; *adhavā*, or; that You have been insulted *api*, even; *tat-samakṣam*, in public, in the very presence of others (—*tat* being used as an adverb); *tat*, for that, for all those offences; O Acyuta, *aham*, I; *kṣāmaye*, beg pardon; *tvām*, of You; *aprameyam*, the incomprehensible One, who are beyond the means of knowledge.

(I beg Your pardon) because,

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान्।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिक: कुतोऽन्यो
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव॥४३॥

43. You are the Father of all beings moving and non-moving; to this (world) You are worthy of worship, the Teacher, and greater (than a teacher). There is none equal to You; how at all can there be anyone greater even in all the three worlds, O You of unrivalled power?

Asi, You are; *pitā*, the Father, the Progenitor; *lokasya*, of all beings; *cara-acarasya*, moving and non-moving. Not only are You the Father of this world, You are also *pūjyaḥ*, worthy of worship; since You are the *guruḥ*, Teacher; (56) *garīyān*, greater (than a teacher). How are You greater? In answer he says: *Asti*, there is; *na*, none other; *tvat-samaḥ*, equal to You; for there is no possibility of two Gods. Because all dealings will come to naught if there be many Gods! When there is no possibility of another being equal to You, *kutaḥ eva*, how at all; can there be *anyaḥ*, anyone; *abhyadhikaḥ*, greater; *api*, even; *lokatraye*, in all the three worlds; *apratima-prabhāvaḥ*, O You of unrivalled power?

That by which something is measured is *pratimā*. You who have no measure for Your power (*prabhāva*) are *a-pratima-prabhāvaḥ*. *Apratima-prabhāva* means ‘O You of limitless power!’

Since this is so,

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम्।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम्॥४४॥

44. Therefore, by bowing down and prostrating the body, I seek to propitiate You who are God and are adorable. O Lord, You should (57) forgive (my faults) as would a father (the faults) of a son, as a friend of a friend, and as a lover of a beloved.

Tasmāt, therefore; *praṇamya*, by bowing down; and *praṇidhāya kāyam*, prostrating, laying, the body completely down; *prasādaye*, I seek to propitiate; *tvām*, You; who are *īśam*, God, the Lord; and are *īḍyam*, adorable. *Deva*, O God; You on Your part, *arhasi*, should; *soḍhum*, bear with, i.e. forgive (my faults); *iva*, as would; a *pitā*, father; forgives all the faults *putrasya*, of a son; and as a *sakhā*, friend; the faults *sakhyuḥ*, of a friend; or as a *priyaḥ*, lover; forgives the faults *priyāyāḥ*, of a beloved.

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा
भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास॥४५॥

45. I am delighted by seeing something not seen heretofore, and my mind is stricken with fear. O Lord, show me that very form; O supreme God, O Abode of the Universe, be gracious!

Asmi, I am; *hṛṣitaḥ*, delighted; *dṛṣṭvā*, by seeing; *adṛṣṭa-pūrvam*, something not seen heretofore—by seeing this Cosmic form of Yours which has never been seen before by me or others. And *me*, my; *manaḥ*, mind; is *pravyathitam*, stricken; *bhayena*, with fear. Therefore, *deva*, O Lord; *darśaya*, show; *me*, to me; *tat eva*, that very; *rūpam*, form, which is of my friend. *Deveśa*, O supreme God; *jagan-nivāsa*, Abode of the Universe; *prasīda*, be gracious!

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-
मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव।

तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन
सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते॥४६॥

46. I want to see You just as before, wearing a crown, wielding a mace, and holding a disc in hand. O You with thousand arms, O You of Cosmic form, appear with that very form with four hands.

Aham, I; *icchāmi*, want; *draṣṭum*, to see; *tvām*, You; *kirīṭinam*, wearing a crown; as also *gadinam*, wielding a mace; and *cakra-hastam*, holding a disc in hand; that is, *tathā eva*, just as before. Since this is so, therefore, *sahasra-bāho*, O You with a thousand arms—in Your present Cosmic form; *viśva-mūrte*, O You of Cosmic form; *bhava*, appear; *tena eva rūpeṇa*, with that very form—with the form of the son of Vasudeva; *caturbhujena*, with four hands. The idea is: withdrawing the Cosmic form, appear in that very form as the son of Vasudeva.

Noticing Arjuna to have become afraid, and withdrawing the Cosmic form, reassuring him with sweet words—

The Blessed Lord said:

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं
रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात्।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं
यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम्॥४७॥

47. Out of grace, O Arjuna, this supreme, radiant, Cosmic, infinite, primeval form—which (form) of Mine has not been seen before by anyone other than you, has been shown to you by Me through the power of My own Yoga.

Prasannena, out of grace — grace means the intention of favouring you; O Arjuna, *idam*, this; *param*, supreme; *tejomayam*, abundantly radiant; *viśvam*, Cosmic, all-comprehensive; *anantam*, infinite, limitless; *adyam*, primeval—that which existed in the beginning; *rūpam*, form, the Cosmic form; *yat* which form; *me*, of Mine; *na dṛṣṭa-pūrvam*, has not been seen before; *tvat-anyena*, by anyone other than you; *darśitam*, has been shown; *tava*, to you; *mayā*, by Me—who am gracious, being possessed of that

(intention of favouring you); *ātma-yogāt*, through the power of My own Yoga, through the power of My own Godhood.

'You have certainly got all your ends accomplished by the vision of the form of Mine who am the Self.' (58) Saying so, He eulogizes that (vision):

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानै-
र्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके
द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर॥४८॥

48. Not by the study of the Vedas and sacrifices, not by gifts, not even by rituals, not by severe austerities can I, in this form, be perceived in the human world by anyone (59) other than you, O most valiant among the Kurus.

Na veda-yajña-adhyayanaiḥ, not by the study of the Vedas and sacrifices, (that is) not by the methodical study of even the four Vedas and the study of the sacrifices—since the study of the sacrifices is achieved by the very study of the Vedas, the separate mention of the study of sacrifices is for suggesting detailed knowledge of sacrifices; (60) so also, *na dānaiḥ*, not by gifts—in such forms as distributing wealth equal to the weight of the giver; *na ca kriyābhiḥ*, not even by rituals—by Vedic and other rituals like Agnihotra etc.; nor even *ugraiḥ tapobhiḥ*, by severe austerities such a Cāndrāyaṇa (61) etc. which are frightful; *śakyaḥ aham*, can I; *evam rūpam*, in this form—possessing the Cosmic form as was shown; *drasṭum*, be perceived; *nṛloke*, in the human world; *tvad-anyena*, by anyone other than you; *kuru-pravīra*, O most valiant among the Kurus.

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो
दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम्।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं
तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य॥४९॥

49. May you have no fear, and may not there be bewilderment by seeing this form of Mine so terrible. Becoming free from fear and gladdened in mind again, see this very earlier form of Mine.

Mā te vyathā, may you have no fear; and *mā vimūḍha-bhāvaḥ*, may not there be bewilderment of the mind; *dṛṣṭvā*, by seeing, perceiving; *idam*, this *rūpam*, form; *mama*, of Mine; *īdṛk ghoram*, so terrible, as was revealed. *Vyapetabhīḥ*, becoming free from fear; and becoming *prīta-manāḥ*, gladdened in mind; *punaḥ*, again; *prapaśya*, see; *idam*, this; *eva*, very; *tat*, earlier; *rūpam*, form; *me*, of Mine, with four hands, holding a conch, a discus and a mace, which is dear to you.

Sañjaya said—

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा
स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं
भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा॥५०॥

50. Thus, having spoken to Arjuna in that manner, Vāsudeva showed His own form again. And He, the exalted One, reassured this terrified one by again becoming serene in form.

Iti, thus; *uktvā*, having spoken; *arjunam*, to Arjuna; *tathā*, in that manner, the words as stated above; Vāsudeva *darśayāmāsa*, showed; *svakam*, His own; *rūpam*, form, as was born in the house of Vāsudeva; *bhūyaḥ*, again. And the *mahātmā*, exalted One; *āśvāsayāmāsa*, reassured; *enam*, this; *bhītam*, terrified one; *bhūtvā*, by becoming; *punaḥ*, again; *saumya-vapuḥ*, serene in form, graceful in body.

Arjuna said:

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः॥५१॥

51. O Janārdana, having seen this serene human form of Yours, I have now become calm in mind and restored to my own nature.

O Janārdana, *dṛṣṭvā*, having seen; *idam*, this; *saumyam*, serene; *mānuṣam*, human; *rūpam*, form; *tava*, of Yours—gracious, as of my friend; *asmi*, I have; *idānīm*, now; *saṁvṛttaḥ*, become;—what?—*sacetāḥ*, calm in mind; and *gataḥ*, restored; *prakṛtim*, to my own nature.

The Blessed Lord said:

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिण:॥५२॥

52. This form of Mine which you have seen is very difficult to see; even the gods are ever desirous of a vision of this form.

Idam, this; *rūpam*, form; *mama*, of Mine; *yat*, which; *dṛṣṭavān asi*, you have seen; is *sudur-darśam*, very difficult to see. *Api*, even; the *devāḥ*, gods; are *nityam*, ever; *darśana-kāṅkṣiṇaḥ*, desirous of a vision; *asya*, of this; *rūpasya*, form of Mine. The idea is that though they want to see, they have not seen in the way you have, nor will they see!

Why so?

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा॥५३॥

53. Not through the Vedas, not by austerity, not by gifts, nor even by sacrifice can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me.

Na vedaiḥ, not through the Vedas, not even through the four Vedas—Ṛk, Yajus, Sāma and Atharvan; *na tapasā*, not by austerity, not by severe austerities like the Cāndrāyaṇa; not *dānena*, by gifts, by gifts of cattle, land, gold, etc.; *na ca*, nor even; *ijyayā*, by sacrifices or worship; *śakyaḥ aham*, can I; *draṣṭum*, be seen *evaṁvidhaḥ*, in this form, in the manner as was shown; *yathā*, as; *dṛṣṭavān asi*, you have seen *mām*, Me.

'How again, can You be seen?' This is being answered:

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परन्तप॥५४॥

54. But, O Arjuna, by single-minded devotion am I—in this form—able to be known and seen in reality, and also be entered into, O destroyer of foes.

Tu, but, O Arjuna; *bhaktyā*, by devotion—. Of what kind? To this the Lord says: *Ananyayā*, by (that devotion which is) single-minded. That is called single-minded devotion which does not turn to anything else other

than the Lord, and owing to which nothing else but Vāsudeva is perceived by all the organs. With that devotion, *aham śakyaḥ*, am I able; *evamvidhaḥ*, in this form—in the aspect of the Cosmic form; *jñātum*, to be known—from the scriptures; not merely to be known from the scriptures, but also *draṣṭum*, to be seen , to be realized directly; *tattvena*, in reality; and also *praveṣṭum*, to be entered into—for attaining Liberation; *parantapa*, O destroyer of foes.

Now the essential purport of the whole scripture, the *Gītā*, which is meant for Liberation, is being stated by summing it up so that it may be practised:

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव॥५५॥

55. O son of Pāṇḍu, he who works for Me, accepts Me as the supreme Goal, is devoted to Me, is devoid of attachment and free from enmity towards all beings—he attains Me.

Pāṇḍava, O son of Pāṇḍu; *yaḥ*, he who; *mat-karma-kṛt*, works for Me: work for Me is *mat-karma*; one who does it is *mat-karma-kṛt*—.

Mat-paramaḥ, who accepts Me as the supreme Goal: A servant does work for his master, but does not accept the master as his own supreme Goal to be attained after death; this one, however, who does work for Me, accepts Me alone as the supreme Goal. Thus he is *matparamaḥ*—one to whom I am the supreme Goal—.

So also he who is *madbhaktaḥ*, devoted to me: He adores Me alone in all ways, with his whole being and full enthusiasm. Thus he is *madbhaktaḥ* —.

Saṅga-varjitaḥ, who is devoid of attachment for wealth, sons, friends, wife and relatives. *Saṅga* means fondness, love; devoid of them—.

Nirvairaḥ, who is free from enmity; *sarva-bhūteṣu*, towards all beings —bereft of the idea of enmity even towards those engaged in doing utmost harm to him—.

Saḥ, he who is such a devotee of Mine; *eti*, attains; *mām*, Me. I alone am his supreme Goal; he does not attain any other goal. This is the advice for you, given by Me as desired by you.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[40] 'From You have been heard the origin and dissolution of beings *in You*.'

[41] The power of accomplishing the impossible.—M.S.

[42] *Hari*: destroyer of ignorance along with its consequences.

[43] With abundant respect and devotion.

[44] 'I do not see—because of Your all-pervasiveness.'

[45] *Siddha*: A semi-divine being supposed to be of great purity and holiness, and said to be particularly characterized by eight supernatural faculties called *siddhis*.—V.S.A.

[46] *Sādhyas*: A particular class of celestial beings.—V.S.A.

[47] M.S., Ś., and Ś.S. construe 'completely...heat' to qualify 'fierce rays' in the second sentence. However, the use of *kim ca* (moreover) in the Comm. suggests the translation as above.—Tr.

[48] *Time*: The supreme God with His limiting adjunct of the power of action.

[49] *Pravṛddhaḥ*, mighty—according to Ś.—Tr.

[50] *Atiratha*—see note under 1.4–6.—Tr.

[51] i.e. not narrow-minded.

[52] See footnote 19 of Chapter 1.—Tr.

[53] *Dissatisfaction* with only a few salutations.

[54] Aṣṭ. reads '*śatru-vadha-viṣaye*, in the matter of killing an enemy'. —Tr.

[55] Walking, that is, sport or exercise.

[56] He is the Teacher since He introduced the line of teachers of what is virtue and vice, and of the knowledge of the Self. And He is greater than a teacher because He is the teacher even of Hiraṇyagarbha and others.

[57] The elision of *a* (in *arhasi* of *priyāyārhasi*) is a metrical licence.

[58] The word *ātmanaḥ* (who am the Self) does not occur in some editions.—Tr.

[59] ‘*By anyone* who has not received My grace’.

[60] This separate mention of the study of sacrifices is necessary because the ancients understood the study of Vedas to mean learning them by rote.

[61] A religious observance or expiatory penance regulated by the moon’s phases. In it the daily quantity of food, which consists of fifteen mouthfuls at the full-moon, is curtailed by one mouthful during the dark fortnight till it is reduced to nothing at the new moon; and it is increased in a like manner during the bright fortnight.—V.S.A.

CHAPTER 12

BHAKTI–YOGA

'In the chapters beginning with the second and ending with that on the divine manifestations (Chapter 10) has been stated the meditation on the supreme Self, Brahman, the Immutable, devoid of all qualifications. And, in various places, has also been stated the meditation on You, who are God possessed of all mystical powers (62) and the power of omniscience, and have the quality of *sattva* as the limiting adjunct. But in the chapter on "The Revelation of the Cosmic Form", the primal, divine Cosmic form of Yours comprising the whole Universe has been revealed by You for the sake of meditation itself! And after revealing that, You have said, "…he who works for Me," etc. (11.55). Therefore, (63) in order to learn which is the better of these two views, I ask you,'—

Arjuna said:

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः॥१॥

1. Those devotees who, being thus ever dedicated, meditate on You, and those again (who meditate) on the Immutable, the Unmanifested—of them, who are the best experiencers of yoga? (64)

The subject-matter stated in the immediately preceding verse, '... he who works for Me,' etc. is referred to by the word *evam* (thus).

Ye *bhaktāḥ*, those devotees who, seeking no other refuge; *evam*, thus; *satata-yuktāḥ*, being ever-devoted, that is, remaining unceasingly engaged in the works of the Lord, etc., intent on the aforesaid purpose; *paryupāsate*, meditate; *tvām*, on You, in the Cosmic form as revealed earlier; *ye ca api*, and those others, again, who have renounced all desires, who have given up all actions; who meditate on Brahman as described (below), *akṣaram*, on the Immutable; *avyaktam*, on the Unmanifested, which is so on account of being bereft of all limiting adjuncts, (and) which is beyond the comprehension of the organs—in the world, whatever comes within the range of the organs is said to be manifest, for the root *añj* conveys that

sense; but this Immutable is the opposite of that and is endowed with qualifications that are spoken of by the great ones; those again, who meditate on that—; *teṣām*, of them, among the two (groups); *ke*, who; are the *yoga-vit-tamāḥ*, best experiencers of yoga, that is, who are those that are surpassingly versed in yoga?

But leave alone those who meditate on the Immutable, who are fully enlightened and are free from desires. Whatever has to be said with regard to them, we shall say later on. As for those others—

The Blessed Lord said:

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः॥२॥

2. Those who meditate on Me by fixing their minds on Me with steadfast devotion (and) being endowed with supreme faith—they are considered to be the most perfect yogīs according to Me.

Ye, those who, being devotees; *upāsate*, meditate; *mām*, on Me, the supreme Lord of all the masters of yoga, the Omniscient One whose vision is free from purblindness caused by such defects as attachment etc.; *āveśya*, by fixing, concentrating; their *manaḥ*, minds; *mayi*, on Me, on God in His Cosmic form; *nitya-yuktāḥ*, with steadfast devotion, by being ever-dedicated in accordance with the idea expressed in the last verse of the preceding chapter; and being *upetāḥ*, endowed; *parayā*, with supreme; *śraddhayā* faith;—*te*, they; *matāḥ*, are considered; to be *yukta-tamāḥ*, most perfect yogīs; *me*, according to Me, for they spend days and nights with their minds constantly fixed on Me. Therefore, it is proper to say with regard to them that they are the best yogīs.

'Is it that the others do not become the best yogīs?' 'No, but listen to what has to be said as regards them:'

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम्॥३॥

3. Those, however, who meditate in every way on the Immutable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, which is all-pervading, incomprehensible,

changeless, immovable and constant.—

Ye, those; *tu*, however; who, *pari-upāsate*, meditate in every way; *akṣaram*, on the Immutable; *anirdeśyam*, the Indefinable—being unmanifest, It is beyond the range of words and hence cannot be defined; *avyaktam*, the Unmanifest—It is not comprehensible through any means of knowledge—.

Upāsanā, meditation, means approaching an object of meditation as presented by the scriptures, and making it an object of one's own thought and dwelling on it uniterruptedly for long by continuing the same current of thought with regard to it—like a line of pouring oil. This is what is called *upāsanā*.

The Lord states the characteristics of the Immutable: (65) *Sarvatragam*, all-pervading, pervasive like space; and *acintyam*, incomprehensible—because of Its being unmanifest. For, whatever comes within the range of the organs can be thought of by the mind also. Being opposed to that, the Immutable is inconceivable. It is *kūṭastham*, changeless. *Kūṭa* means something apparently good, but evil inside. The word *kūṭa* (deceptive) is well known in the world in such phrases as, '*kūṭa-rūpam*, deceptive in appearance,' '*kūṭa-sāksyam*, false evidence', etc. Thus, *kūṭa* is that which, as ignorance etc., is the seed of many births, full of evil within, referred to by such words as *māyā*, the undifferentiated, etc., and well known from such texts as, 'One should know Māyā to be Nature, but the Lord of Māyā to be the supreme God' (Sv. 4.10), 'The divine Māyā of Mine is difficult to cross over' (7.14), etc. That which exists on that *kūṭa* as its controller (or witness) is the *kūṭa-stha*. Or, *kūṭastha* may mean that which exists like a heap. (66)

Hence It is *acalam*, immovable. Since It is immovable, therefore It is *dhruvam*, constant, that is eternal.

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः॥४॥

4. By fully controlling all the organs and always being even-minded, they, engaged in the welfare of all beings, attain Me alone.

Saṁniyamya, by fully controlling, withdrawing; *indriya-grāmam*, all the organs; and *sarvatra*, always, at all times; *sama-buddhayaḥ*, being even-minded—the even-minded are those whose minds remain equipoised in getting anything desirable or undesirable; *te*, they, those who are of this kind; *ratāḥ*, engaged; *sarva-bhūta-hite*, in the welfare of all beings; *prāpnuvanti*, attain; *mām*, Me; *eva*, alone. As regards them it needs no saying that they attain Me, for it has been said, '... but the man of Knowledge is the very Self. (This is) My opinion' (7.18). It is certainly not proper to speak of being or not being the best among the yogīs with regard to those who have attained identity with the Lord.

But,

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते॥५॥

5. For them who have their minds attached to the Unmanifest the struggle is greater; for, the Goal which is the Unmanifest is attained with difficulty by the embodied ones.

Teṣām, for them; *avyakta-āsakta-cetasām*, who have their minds attached to the Unmanifest; *kleśaḥ*, the struggle; is *adhika-taraḥ*, greater. Although the trouble is certainly great for those who are engaged in works etc. for Me, still, owing to the need of giving up self-identification with the body, it is greater in the case of those who accept the Immutable as the Self and who keep in view the supreme Reality. *Hi*, for; *avyaktā gatiḥ*, the Goal which is the Unmanifest—(the goal) which stands in the form of the Immutable; that is *avāpyate*, attained; *duḥkham*, with difficulty; *dehavadbhiḥ*, by the embodied ones, by those who identify themselves with the body. Hence the struggle is greater.

We shall speak later of the conduct of those who meditate on the Unmanifest.

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते॥६॥

6. As for those who, having dedicated all actions to Me and accepted Me as the supreme, meditate by thinking of Me with single-minded

concentration only—.

Tu, as for; *ye*, those who; *sannyasya*, having dedicated; *sarvāṇi*, all; *karmāṇi*, actions; *mayi*, to Me who am God; and *matparāḥ*, having accepted Me as the supreme; *upāsate*, meditate; *dhyāyantaḥ*, by thinking; *mām*, of Me; *ananyena*, with single-minded; *yogena*, concentration; *eva*, only—. That (yoga) is single-minded which has no other object than the Cosmic Deity, the Self. By thinking exclusively with that single-minded (67) (yoga)—.

What comes to them?

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात्।
भवामि न चिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम्॥७॥

7. O son of Pṛthā, for them who have their minds absorbed in Me, I become, without delay, the Deliverer from the sea of the world which is fraught with death.

O son of Pṛthā, *tesām*, for them who are solely devoted to meditating on Me; *āveśita-cetasām mayi*, who have their minds absorbed in, fixed on, merged in, Me who am the Cosmic Person; *aham*, I, God; *bhavāmi*, become; *na cirāt*, without delay;—what then? soon indeed—the *samuddhartā*, Deliverer—. Wherefrom? In answer the Lord says, *mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt*, from the sea of the world which is fraught with death. *Saṁsāra* (world) fraught with *mṛtyu* (death) is *mṛtyu-saṁsāra*. That itself is like a sea, being difficult to cross. I become their deliverer from that sea of transmigration which is fraught with death.

Since this is so, therefore,

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः॥८॥

8. Fix the mind on Me alone; in Me alone rest the intellect. There is no doubt that hereafter you will dwell in Me alone. (68)

Ādhatsva, fix *manaḥ*, the mind—possessed of the power of thinking and doubting; *mayi*, on Me, on God as the Cosmic Person; *eva*, alone. *Mayi*, in Me; *eva*, alone; *niveśaya*, rest; the *buddhim*, intellect, which engages in

determining (things). Listen to what will happen to you thereby: *Na saṁśayaḥ*, there is no doubt—no doubt should be entertained with regard to this; that *ataḥ ūrdhvam*, hereafter, after the fall of the body; *nivasiṣyasi*, you will dwell; *mayi*, in Me, live in identity with Me; *eva*, alone.

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम्।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय॥९॥

9. If, however, you are unable to establish the mind steadily on Me, then, O Dhanañjaya, seek to attain Me through the Yoga of Practice.

Atha, if, however; *na śaknoṣi*, you are unable; *samādhātum*, to establish, in this way as I have described; *cittam*, the mind; *sthiram*, steadily, unwaveringly; *mayi*, on Me; *tataḥ*, then; O Dhanañjaya, *iccha*, seek, pray; *āptum*, to attain; *mām*, Me, as the Cosmic person; *abhyāsa-yogena*, through the Yoga of Practice.

Practice consists in repeatedly fixing the mind on a single object by withdrawing it from everything else. The yoga following from this, and consisting in concentration of the mind, is *abhyāsa-yoga*.

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि॥१०॥

10. If you are unable even to practise, be intent on works for Me. By undertaking works for Me as well, you will attain perfection. (69)

If *asamarthaḥ asi*, you are unable; *api*, even; *abhyāse*, to practise; then, *bhava*, be; *mat-karmaparamaḥ*, intent on works for Me—works (*karma*) meant for Me (*mat*) are *mat-karma*—that is, you be such that works meant for Me become most important to you. In the absence of Practice, *api*, even; *kurvan*, by undertaking; *karmāṇi*, works alone; *madartham*, for Me; *avāpsyasi*, you will attain; *siddhim*, perfection—by gradually acquiring purification of mind, concentration and Knowledge.

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान्॥११॥

11. If you are unable to do even this, in that case, having resorted to the Yoga for Me, thereafter renounce the results of all works by becoming controlled in mind.

Atha, if, again; *aśaktaḥ asi*, you are unable; *kartum*, to do; *etat api*, even this—what was stated as being 'intent on doing works for Me'; in that case, *mad-yogam-āśritaḥ*, having resorted to the Yoga for Me—the performance of those works that are being done by dedicating them to Me is *madyogaḥ*; by resorting to that Yoga for Me; *tataḥ*, thereafter; *sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam kuru*, renounce, give up, the results of all works; by becoming *yata-ātmavān*, controlled in mind. (70)

Now the Lord praises the renunciation of the results of all works:

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम्॥१२॥

12 Knowledge is surely superior to practice; meditation surpasses knowledge. The renunciation of the results of works (excels) meditation. From renunciation, Peace follows immediately.

Jñānam, knowledge; (71) is *hi*, surely; *śreyaḥ*, superior; —to what?— *abhyāsāt*, to practice (72) which is not preceded by discrimination. *Dhyānam*, meditation, undertaken along with knowledge; *viśiṣyate*, surpasses even *jñānāt*, that knowledge. *Karma-phala-tyāgaḥ*, renunciation of the results of works; excels even *dhyānāt*, meditation associated with knowledge. ('Excels' has to be supplied.) *Tyāgāt*, from this renunciation of the results of actions, in the way described before; (73) *śāntiḥ*, Peace, the cessation of transmigratory existence together with its cause; follows *anantaram*, immediately; not that it awaits another occasion.

Should the unenlightened person engaged in works be unable to practise the disciplines enjoined earlier, then, for him has been enjoined renunciation of the results of all works as a means to Liberation. But this has not been done at the very beginning. And for this reason renunciation of the results of all works has been praised in, 'Knowledge is surely superior to practice,' etc. by teaching about the successive excellence. For it has been taught as being fit to be adopted by one in case he is unable to practise the disciplines already presented. (74)

Objection: From what similarity does the eulogy follow?

Reply: In the verse, ‘When all desires clinging to one’s heart fall off’ (Ka, 2.3.14), it has been stated that Immortality results from the rejection of all desires. That is well known. And ‘all desires’ means the ‘result of all rites and duties enjoined in the Vedas and Smṛtis’. From the renunciation of these, Peace surely comes immediately to the enlightened man who is steadfast in Knowledge.

There is a similarity between renunciation of all desires and renunciation of the results of actions by an unenlightened person. Hence, on account of that similarity this eulogy of renunciation of the results of all actions is meant for rousing interest. As for instance, by saying that the sea was drunk up by the Brāhmaṇa Agastya, the Brāhmaṇas of the present day are also praised owing to the similarity of Brahminhood. In this way it has been said that Karma-yoga becomes a means for Liberation, since it involves renunciation of the rewards of works.

Here, again, the Yoga consisting in the concentration of mind on God as the Cosmic Person, as also the performance of actions etc. for God, have been spoken of by assuming a difference between God and Self. In, ‘If you are unable to do even this’ (11) since it has been hinted that it (Karma-yoga) is an effect of ignorance, therefore the Lord is pointing out that Karma-yoga is not suitable for the meditator on the Immutable, who is aware of identity (of the Self with God). The Lord is similarly pointing out the impossibility of a Karma-yogin’s meditation on the Immutable.

In (the verse), ‘they ... attain Me alone’ (4), having declared that those who meditate on the Immutable are independent so far as the attainment of Liberation is concerned, the Lord has shown in, ‘...I become the Deliverer’ (7), that others have no independence; they are dependent on God. For, if they (the former) be considered to have become identified with God, they would be the same as the Immutable on account of (their) having realized non-difference. Consequently, speaking of them as objects of the act of deliverance will become inappropriate!

And, since the Lord is surely the greatest well-wisher of Arjuna, He imparts instructions only about Karma-yoga, which involves perception of

duality and is not associated with full Illumination. Also, no one who has realized his Self as God through valid means of knowledge would like subordination to another, since it involves a contradiction. Therefore, with the idea, 'I shall speak of the group of virtues (as stated in), "He who is not hateful towards any creature," etc. which are the direct means to Immortality, to those monks who meditate on the Immutable, who are steadfast in full enlightenment and have given up all desires,' the Lord proceeds:

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी॥१३॥

13. He who is not hateful towards any creature, who is friendly and compassionate, who has no idea of 'mine' and the idea of egoism, who is the same under sorrow and happiness, who is forgiving;

Adveṣṭā, he who is not hateful; *sarva-bhūtānām*, towards any creature: He does not feel repulsion for anything, even for what may be the cause of sorrow to himself, for he sees all beings as his own Self. *Maitraḥ*, he who is friendly—behaving like a friend; *karuṇaḥ eva ca*, and compassionate: *karuṇā* is kindness, compassion towards sorrow-stricken creatures; one possessing that is *karuṇaḥ*, that is a monk, who grants safety to all creatures. *Nirmamaḥ*, he who has no idea of 'mine'; *nirahaṅkāraḥ*, who has no idea of egoism; *sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ*, who is the same under sorrow and happiness, he in whom sorrow and happiness do not arouse any repulsion or attraction; *kṣamī*, who is forgiving, who remains unperturbed even when abused or assaulted;

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः॥१४॥

14. He who is ever content, who is a yogī, who has self-control, who has firm conviction, who has dedicated his mind and intellect to Me—he who is such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

Santuṣṭaḥ satatam, he who is ever content: who has the sense of contentment irrespective of getting or not getting what is needed for the maintenance of the body; who is similarly ever-satisfied whether he gets or

not a good thing. *Yogī*, who is a yogī, a man of concentrated mind; *yata-ātmā*, who has self-control, whose body and organs are under control; *dṛḍha-niścayaḥ*, who has firm conviction—with regard to the reality of the Self; *arpita-mano-buddhiḥ*, who has dedicated his mind and intellect; *mayi*, to Me—(that is) a monk whose mind (having the characteristics of reflection) and intellect (possessed of the faculty of taking decisions) are dedicated to, fixed on, Me alone; *saḥ yaḥ*, he who is; such a *madbhaktaḥ*, devotee of Mine; is *priyaḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me. It was hinted in the Seventh Chapter, 'For I am very much dear to the man of Knowledge, and he too is dear to Me' (7.17). That is being elaborated here.

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः॥१५॥

15. He, too, owing to whom the world is not disturbed, and who is not disturbed by the world, who is free from joy, impatience, fear and anxiety, is dear to Me.

Saḥ ca, he too; *yasmāt*, owing to whom, owing to which monk; *lokaḥ*, the world; *na udvijate*, is not disturbed, not afflicted, not agitated; so also, *yaḥ na udvijate*, he who is not disturbed; *lokāt*, by the world; *muktaḥ*, who is free; *harṣa-amarṣa-bhaya-udvegaiḥ*, from joy, impatience, fear and anxiety;—*harṣa* is elation of the mind on acquiring a thing dear to oneself, and is manifested as horripilation, shedding of tears, etc.; *amarṣa* is non-forbearance; *bhaya* is fright; *udvega* is distress; he who is free from them—, is *priyaḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me.

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः॥१६॥

16. He who has no desires, who is pure, who is dextrous, who is impartial, who is free from fear, who has renounced every undertaking—he who is (such) a devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

Anapekṣaḥ, he who has no desires with regard to covetable things like body, organs, objects, (their inter-) relationship, etc.; *śuciḥ*, who is pure, endowed with external and internal purity; *dakṣaḥ*, who is dextrous, who is able to promptly understand in the right way the duties that present

themselves; *udāsīnaḥ*, who is impartial, the monk who does not side with anybody—friends and others; *gatavyathaḥ*, who is free from fear; *sarva-ārambha-parityāgī*, who has renounced every undertaking—works undertaken are *ārambhāḥ*; *sarva-ārambhāḥ* means works undertaken out of desire for results to be enjoyed here or hereafter; he who is apt to give them up (*pari-tyāga*) is *sarva-ārambha-parityāgī*; he who is such a *madbhaktaḥ*, devotee of Mine; he is *priyaḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me.

Further,

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न कांक्षति।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् य: स मे प्रिय:॥१७॥

17. He who does not rejoice, does not fret, does not lament, does not hanker; who gives up good and bad, who is filled with devotion—he is dear to Me.

Yaḥ, he who; *na hṛṣyati*, does not rejoice on getting a coveted object; *na dveṣṭi*, does not fret on getting an undesirable object; *na śocati*, does not lament on the loss of a dear one; and *na kāṅkṣati*, does not hanker after an object not acquired; *śubha-aśubha-parityāgī*, who gives up good and bad, who is apt to give up good and bad actions; *bhaktimān*, who is full of devotion—he is dear to Me.

सम: शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयो:।
शीतोष्णसुखदु:खेषु सम: सङ्गविवर्जित:॥१८॥

18. He who is the same towards friend and foe, and so also in honour and dishonour; who is the same under cold, heat, happiness and sorrow, who is free from attachment to everything;

Samaḥ, who is the same; *śatrau ca mitre*, towards friend and foe; *ca tathā*, and so also; *māna-apamānayoḥ*, in honour and dishonour, in adoration and humiliation; who is the same *śīta-uṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu*, under cold, heat, happiness and sorrow; and *saṅga-vivar-jitaḥ*, free from attachment to everything;

Moreover,

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित्।

अनिकेत: स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नर:॥१९॥

19. The person to whom denunciation and praise are the same, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, and full of devotion is dear to Me.

Naraḥ, the person; *tulya-nindā-stutiḥ*, to whom denunciation and praise are the same; *maunī*, who is silent, restrained in speech; *santuṣṭaḥ*, content; *yena-kenacit*, with anything—for the mere maintenance of the body, as has been said in, 'The gods know him to be a Brāhmaṇa who is clad by anyone whosoever, who is fed by anyone whosoever, who lies wheresoever' (Mbh. Śā. 245.12); further, *aniketaḥ*, he who is homeless, who has no fixed place of residence—'without a home' (75), as said in another Smṛti; *sthira-matiḥ*, steady-minded, whose thought is steady with regard to the Reality which is the supreme Goal; and *bhaktimān*, who is full of devotion—(he) is dear to Me. (76)

The group of qualities of the monks who meditate on the Immutable, who have renounced all desires, who are steadfast in the knowledge of the supreme Goal—which (qualities) are under discussion beginning from 'He who is not hateful towards any creature' (13), is being concluded:

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते।
श्रद्दधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रिया:॥२०॥

20. But (77) those devotees who accept Me as the supreme Goal, and with faith seek for this ambrosia (78) which is indistinguishable from the virtues as stated above, they are very dear to Me.

Tu, but; *ye bhaktāḥ*, those devotees of Mine, the monks who have resorted to the highest devotion consisting in the knowledge of the supreme Reality; *mat-paramāḥ*, who accept Me as the supreme Goal, to whom I, as mentioned above, who am identical with the Immutable, am the highest (*paramā*), unsurpassable Goal; and *śraddadhānāḥ*, with faith; *paryupāsate*, seek for, practise; *idam*, this; *dharmyāmṛtam*, ambrosia that is indistinguishable from the virtues—that which is indistinguishable from *dharma* (virtue) is *dharmya*, and this is called *amṛta* (ambrosia) since it leads to Immortality—; *yathā-uktam*, as stated above in, 'He who is not

hateful towards any creature,' etc.; *te*, they; are *atīva*, very; *priyāḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me.

After having explained what was hinted in, 'For I am very much dear to the man of Knowledge ...' (7.17), that has been concluded here in, 'Those devotees are very dear to Me.'

Since by seeking for this ambrosia, which is indistinguishable from the virtues as stated above, one becomes very dear to Me, who am the Lord Viṣṇu, the supreme God, therefore this nectar which is indistinguishable from the virtues has to be diligently sought for by one who is a seeker of Liberation, who wants to attain the coveted Abode of Viṣṇu. This is the purport of the sentence. (79)

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[62] The power of Yoga, i.e. the power of bringing about creation, existence, destruction and merger of the whole Universe.

[63] *Therefore*: Since the unqualified Brahman and the qualified Brahman have been presented as objects of knowledge and meditation respectively, therefore …

[64] (Here) yoga means *samādhi*, spiritual absorption.

[65] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*upasyasya*, which is the object of meditation'.—Tr.

[66] That is, motionless.

[67] The Aṣṭ. and the Ā.Ā. read '*kena*, what?' in place of '*kevalena*, exclusively'.—Tr.

[68] For the sake of metre, *eva* and *ataḥ* (in the second line of the verse) are not joined together (to form *evātaḥ*).

[69] Identity with Brahman.

[70] In the earlier verse it was enjoined that all works, be they Vedic or secular, are to be considered as belonging to God and should be done for Him—not for oneself—, as a soldier would do for his king. In the present verse it is stated that the attitude should be, 'May this

work of mine please God.’ This very attitude involves dedication of results to God. See Ś.

According to M.S., *mat-karma* in the earlier verse means *bhāgavata-dharma*, that is hearing, singing, etc. about God. In the present verse, *sarva-karma* means all works in general.—Tr.

[71] Firm conviction about the Self arrived at through Vedic texts and reasoning.

[72] *Practice*—repeated effort to ascertain the true meaning of Vedic texts, in order to acquire knowledge.

[73]By dedicating all actions to God with the idea, ‘May God be pleased.’

[74] *Presented* from verse 3 onwards.

[75] The whole verse is:
न कुड्यां नोदके सङ्गो न चैले न त्रिपुष्करे ।
नागारे नाऽऽसने नान्ने यस्य वै मोक्षवित्तु सः ॥

‘He, however is certainly the knower of Liberation who has attachment neither for a hut, nor for water, nor cloth, nor the three places of pilgrimage, nor a home, nor a seat, nor food.’

[76] There is a repeated mention of Bhakti in this Chapter because it is a means to the Knowledge which leads to the supreme Goal.

[77] *Tu* (*but*) is used to distinguish those who have attained the highest Goal from the aspirants.—Tr.

[78] M.S.’s reading is *dharmāmṛtam*—nectar in the form of virtue. Virtue is called nectar because it leads to Immortality, or because it is sweet like nectar.

Dharmyam means that which is ‘achievable by dint of the virtue’ of aspiration for Liberation; and since the virtues—beginning from ‘unhatefulness’—are the unfailing means of achieving Immortality, they are therefore *amṛta*. —Ś.

[79] Thus, after the consummation of meditation on the qualified Brahman, one who aspires after the unqualified Brahman, who has the qualifications mentioned in, ‘He who is not hateful towards any creature,’ etc., who is pre-eminently fit for this purpose, and who practises *śravaṇa* etc. has the possibility of realizing the Truth from which his Liberation logically follows. Hence, the conclusion is that the meaning of the word *tat* (in the sentence *tattvamasi*) has to be sought for, since this has the power to arouse the comprehension of the meaning of that sentence, which is the means to Liberation.

CHAPTER 13

DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN NATURE AND SOUL

Two aspects of God were briefly mentioned in the Seventh Chapter—that consisting of the three qualities, which is divided eightfold and is lower since it leads to transmigration, and the other, the higher, which has become the individual soul described as the knower of the body, and which is essentially divine—, through which two aspects God becomes the Cause of creation, continuance and dissolution of the Universe.

That being so, the chapter dealing with the 'field' (80) is being commenced with a view to determining the true nature of God who is possessed of these two aspects, though the exposition of the two aspects characterized as the 'field' and the 'knower of the field'. And in the just preceding chapter, the steadfastness of the monks, the knowers of Reality, that is, how they practise (the virtues), has been stated in the verses beginning from 'He who is not hateful towards any creature' (12.13) to the end of the chapter. Being possessed of what knowledge of Reality, again, do they, through the practice of the virtues described above, become dear to the Lord? The present chapter is begun with a view to showing this also.

And Nature, consisting to the three qualities and transformed into all the bodies, organs and objects, becomes aggregated in the form of bodies and organs for subserving the ends, viz. enjoyment and Liberation, of the individual soul. That aggregate is this body. That is what is meant:

The Blessed Lord said:

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते।
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः॥१॥

1. O son of Kuntī, this body is referred to as the 'field'. Those who are versed in this call him who is conscious of it as the 'knower of the field'.

The Lord specifies the body as the object referred to by the pronoun *idam* (this). O son of Kuntī, (this body) *abhidhīyate*, is referred to; *kṣetram iti*, as the field—because it is protected (*tra*) against injury (*kṣata*), or

because it perishes (*kṣi*), wastes away (*kṣar*), or because the results of actions get fulfilled in the body as in a field (*kṣetra*). The word *iti* is used in the sense of 'as'.

They—who?—*tadvidaḥ*, who are versed in this, who know the 'field' and the 'knower of the field'; *āhuḥ*, call; *tam*, him, the knower; *yaḥ*, who; *vetti etat*, is conscious of, *knows*, it, the body, the field—makes it, from head to foot, an object of his knowledge; makes it an object of perception as a separate entity, through knowledge which is spontaneous or is acquired through instruction; *kṣetrajña iti*, as the knower of the field. As before, the word *iti* is used in the sense of 'as'. They call him *as* the knower of the field.

It is that the field and the knower of the field thus mentioned are to be understood through this much knowledge only? The answer is, no.

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम॥२॥

2. And, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, understand Me to be the 'Knower of the field' in all the fields. In My opinion, that is Knowledge which is the knowledge of the field and the knower of the field.

Ca api, and; *viddhi*, understand; *mām*, Me, the supreme God who is transcendental; to be the *kṣetrajñam*, 'Knower of the field' with the characteristics noted above; *sarva-kṣetreṣu*, in all the fields. The idea is this: Know the 'Knower of the field'—who has become diversified by limiting adjuncts in the form of numerous 'fields' ranging from Brahmā to a clump of grass—as free from differentiations resulting from all the limiting adjuncts, and as beyond the range of such words and ideas as existence, non-existence, etc.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, since there remains nothing to be known apart from the true nature of the field, the knower of the field and God, therefore, *tat*, that; is *jñānam*, Knowledge, right knowledge; *yat*, which; is the *jñānam*, knowledge; *kṣetra-kṣetrajñayoḥ*, of the field and the knower of the field—which are the two knowables—, and by which Knowledge the field and the knower of the field are made objects of knowledge. This is *mama*, My, God Viṣṇu's; *matam*, opinion.

Objection: Well, if it be that in all the fields there exists God alone, and none else other than Him, as the enjoyer, then God will become a mundane being; or, due to the absence of any mundane creature other than God, there will arise the contingency of the negation of mundane existence. And both these are undesirable, since the scriptures dealing with bondage, Liberation and their causes will become useless, and also because they contradict such valid means of knowledge as direct perception.

In the first place, mundane existence which is characterized by happiness, sorrow and their causes is apprehended through direct perception. Besides, from the perception of variety in the world it can be inferred that mundane existence results from virtue and vice. All this becomes illogical if God and the individual soul be one.

Reply: No, because this becomes justifiable owing to the difference between Knowledge and ignorance. 'These two, viz. that which is known as Knowledge and that which is known as ignorance are widely contradictory, and they follow divergent courses' (Ka. 1.2.4.); and similarly, the different results, viz. Liberation and enjoyment, belonging (respectively) to those Knowledge and ignorance, have also been pointed out to be contrary by saying that Liberation is the goal of Knowledge, and enjoyment is the result of ignorance (see Ka. 1.2.2). Vyāsa, also has said so: 'Now, there are these two paths' (Mbh Śā. 241.6) etc. and, 'There are only these two paths,' etc. Here (in the *Gītā*) also, two kinds of steadfastness have been stated. And it is understood from the Vedas, the Smṛtis and reason that ignorance together with its effects has to be destroyed by Knowledge.

As for the Vedic texts, they are:

'If one has realized here, then there is truth; if he has not realized here, then there is great destruction' (Ke. 2.5);

'Knowing Him in this way, one becomes Immortal here' (Nṛ. Pū. 6);

'There is no other path to go by' (Sv. 3.8);

'The enlightened man is not afraid of anything' (Tai. 2.9.1).

On the other hand, (the texts) with regard to the unenlightened person are:

'Then, he is smitten with fear' (Tai. 2.7.1);

'Living in the midst of ignorance' (Ka. 1.2.5);

> ‘One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman indeed. In his line is not born anyone who does not know Brahman’ (Mu. 3.2.9);

> ‘(While he who worships another god thinking,) “He is one, and I am another,” does not know. He is like an animal to the gods’ (Bṛ. 1.4.10).

He who is a knower of the Self, ‘He becomes all this (Universe)’ (Bṛ. 1.4.10); ‘When men will fold up space like (folding) leather, (then) there will be cessation of sorrow, without knowing the Deity’ (Śv. 6.9). There are thousands of texts like these.

And the Smṛti texts (from the *Gītā*) are:

> ‘Knowledge remains covered by ignorance. Thereby the creatures become deluded’ (5.15);

> ‘Here itself is rebirth conquered by them whose minds are established on sameness’ (5.19);

> ‘Since by seeing equally the God who is present alike everywhere (he does not injure the Self by the Self, therefore he attains the supreme Goal)’ (13.28), etc.

And as for reason, there is the text, ‘Men avoid snakes, tips of *kuśa*-grass as also wells when they are aware of them. Some fall into them owing to ignorance. Thus, see the special result arising from knowledge’ (Mbh. Śā. 201.17).

Similarly, it is known that an unenlightened person, who identifies himself with the body etc. and who practises righteousness and unrighteousness under the impulsion of attachment and aversion, takes birth and dies. It cannot be reasonably denied by anyone that, those who see the Self as different from the body etc. become liberated as a result of the cessation of righteous and unrighteous conduct, which depends on the destruction of attachment and aversion.

This being so, the Knower of the field, who in reality is God Himself, appears to have become a mundane soul owing to the various adjuncts which are products of ignorance; as for instance the individual soul becomes identified with the body etc. For it is a well-known fact in the case of all creatures that their self-identity with the body etc. which are not-Self is definitely caused by ignorance. Just as, when a stump of a tree is firmly regarded as a man, the qualities of a man do not thereby come to exist in the stump, nor do the qualities of the stump come to the person, similarly the property of consciousness does not come to the body, nor those of the body to consciousness. It is not proper that the Self should be identified with

happiness, sorrow, delusion, etc., since they, like decrepitude and death, are equally the products of ignorance.

Objection: May it not be said that this is not so, because of dissimilarity? The stump and the man, which are verily *objects of perception*, are superimposed on each other through ignorance by their perceiver. On the other hand, in the case of the body and the Self, the mutual superimposition occurs verily between a *knower* and an *object of perception*. Thus, the illustration is not equally applicable. Therefore, may it not be that the properties of the body, though objects of knowledge, belong to the Self which is the knower?

Reply: No, since there arises the contingency of (the Self) becoming devoid of consciousness! If qualities such as happiness, sorrow, delusion, desire, etc. of the body etc., which are the field and are objects of knowledge, indeed belong to the knower, then it will be necessary to explain the particular reason why some of the qualities of the object of knowledge—the field—superimposed through ignorance belong to the Self, while decrepitude, death, etc. do not. (On the contrary) it is possible to infer that they (happiness etc.) do not pertain to the Self, since, like decrepitude etc., they are superimposed on the Self through ignorance, and because they are either avoidable or acceptable.

This being so, the mundane state, consisting of agentship and enjoyership pertaining to the objects of knowledge, is superimposed on the knower through ignorance. Hence, nothing of the knower is affected thereby—in the same way as nothing of the sky is affected by the superimposition of surface, dirt, etc. (on it) by fools. Such being the case, not the least touch of the mundane state is to be apprehended with regard to the almighty (81) God, the Knower of the field, even though He exists in all the fields. For it is nowhere seen in the world that anybody is benefitted or harmed by a quality attributed to him through ignorance.

As for the statement that the illustration is not equally applicable—that is wrong.

Objection: How?

Reply: Because what is intended as common between the illustration and the thing illustrated is merely the superimposition through ignorance. There is no disagreement as to that. However, as for your contention that the illustration fails with regard to the Knower, that too has been shown to be inapt by citing the example of decrepitude etc. (82)

Objection: May it not be that the Knower of the field becomes a mundane being owing to his having ignorance?

Reply: No, because ignorance is of the nature of *tamas*. Since ignorance has the nature of covering, it is indeed a notion born of *tamas*; it makes one perceive contrarily, or it arouses doubt, or it leads to non-perception. For it disappears with the dawn of discrimination. And the three kind of ignorance, viz. non-perception etc., (83) are experienced when there are such defects as blindness etc. which are forms of *tamas* and have the nature of veiling. (84)

Objection: Here it is asserted that if this be the case, then ignorance is a quality of the knower?

Reply: No, for the defects such as blindness are seen to belong to the eye which is an organ. As for your notion that 'ignorance is a quality of the experiencer, and the very fact of being possessed of the quality of ignorance is what constitutes the mundane state of the Knower of the field; the assertion which was made (by the Vedāntin) in that connection, "that the Knower of the field is God Himself and not a mundane being," is improper,'—this is not so. As for example: Since such defects as false perception etc. are seen to belong to the organ eye, therefore false perception etc. or their causes, viz. defects like blindness etc., do not belong to the perceiver. Just as blindness of the eyes does not pertain to the perceiver since on being cured through treatment it is not seen in the perceiver, similarly notions like non-perception, false perception, doubt, and their causes should, in all cases, pertain to some organ; not to the perceiver, the Knower of the field. And since they are objects of perception, they are not qualities of the Knower in the same way that light is of a lamp. Just because they are objects of perception, they are cognized as different from one's own Self.

Besides, it is denied by all schools of thought that in Liberation, when all the organs depart, there is any association with such defects as ignorance etc. If they (the defects) be the qualities of the Self Itself, the Knower of the field, as heat is of fire, then there can never be a dissociation from them. Again, since there can be no association with or dissociation from anything for the immutable, formless Self which is all-pervading like space, therefore it is established that the Knower of the field is ever identical with God. This follows also from the utterance of the Lord, 'Being without beginning and without qualities' (31), etc.

Objection: Well, if this be so, then, owing to the non-existence of the world and the mundane creatures, there will arise the defect of the uselessness of the scriptures, etc.

Reply: No, since this (defect) is admitted by all. A defect that is admitted by all who believe in the Self is not to be explained by one alone!

Objection: How has this been admitted by all?

Reply: People of all schools of thought who believe in the Self admit that there is no worldly behaviour or the behaviour of a worldling in the liberated ones. Yet, in their case (that is in those various schools), it is not admitted that there is any possibility of such a defect as the scriptures becoming useless, etc. Similarly, in our case let the scriptures be useless when the knowers of the field become identified with God; and purposeful within the sphere of ignorance. This is just as in the case of all the dualists, where it is admitted that the scriptures etc. become useful in the state of bondage, not in the state of Liberation.

Objection: Well, for us all dualists, bondage and Liberation of the Self are real in the truest sense. So, when things to be renounced or accepted as also the means thereto are real, the scriptures etc. become meaningful. On the other hand, may it not be that for the non-dualists, since duality does not exist in truest sense, it being the creation of ignorance, therefore the state of bondage of the Self is not ultimately real, and hence the scriptures etc. become purposeless as they remain shorn of a subject-matter?

Reply: No, since it is not logical that the Self should have different states. If this were possible at all, then the states of bondage and freedom of

the Self should be simultaneous, or successive. As to that, they cannot occur simultaneously, since they are contradictory—like rest and motion in the same object. Should they occur successively and without being caused, then there will arise the contingency of there being no Liberation; if they occur through some cause, then, since they do not exist inherently, there arises the contingency of their being ultimately unreal. In this case also the assumption becomes falsified.

Moreover, when ascertaining the precedence and succession of the states of bondage and Liberation, the state of bondage will have to be considered as being the earlier and having no beginning, but an end. And that is contrary to valid means of knowledge. Similarly it will have to be admitted that the state of Liberation has a beginning, but no end—which is certainly opposed to valid means of knowledge. And it is not possible to establish eternality for something that has states and undergoes a change from one state to another. On the other hand, if for avoiding the defect of non-eternality the different states of bondage and Liberation be not assumed, then, even for the dualists such defects as the purposelessness of the scriptures become certainly unavoidable. Thus, the situation being similar (for both), it is not for the Advaitin (alone) to refute the objection.

Nor do the scriptures become purposeless, because the scriptures are applicable to the commonly known unenlightened person. It is indeed in the case of the ignorant person—not in the case of the enlightened one—that there occurs the perception of identity of the Self with the effect (that is enjoyership) and the cause (that is agentship) which are not-Self. For, in the case of the enlightened persons, it is impossible that, after the dawn of the realization of non-identity of the Self with effect and cause, they can have Self-identification with these as 'I'. Surely, not even a downright fool, or a lunatic and such others, see water and fire or shade and light as identical; what to speak of a discriminating person!

Therefore, such being the case, the scriptures dealing with injunction and prohibition do not concern a person who sees the distinction of the Self from effect and cause. For, when Devadatta is ordered to do some work with the words, 'You do this,' Viṣṇumitra who happens to be there does not, even on hearing the command, conclude, 'I have been ordered.' But

this conclusion is reasonable when the person for whom the order is meant is not understood. So also with regard to cause and effect.

Objection: Can it not be that, even after having realized the Self as different from effect and cause, it is quite reasonable from the standpoint of natural relationship, (85) that with regard to the scriptures one should have the understanding, 'I am enjoined to adopt the means that yields a desired result, and am prohibited from adopting the means that leads to an undesirable result'? As for instance, in the case of a father and son, or between others, even though there exists the awareness of the distinction between each other, still there is the comprehension of the implication of the injunctions and prohibitions meant for one as being also meant for the other. (86)

Reply: No, since identification of the Self with effect and cause is possible only before attaining the knowledge of the Self as distinct (from them). It is only after one has followed (or eschewed) what is enjoined or prohibited by the scriptures that he comprehends his own distinction from the effect and cause; not before. (87) Therefore it is established that the scriptures dealing with injunctions and prohibitions are meant for the ignorant.

Objection: Well, if (injunctions and prohibitions) such as, 'One who desires heaven shall perform sacrifices', 'One should not eat poisoned meat,' etc. be not observed by those who have realized the Self as distinct and by those who view only the body as the Self, then, from the absence of any observer of those (injunctions etc.) there would follow the uselessness of the scriptures.

Reply: No, because engagement in or abstention from actions follows from what is ordained by the scriptures. As for one who has realized the identity of the Lord and the knower of the field, one who has realized Brahman—he does not engage in action. Similarly, even the person who does not believe in the Self does not engage in action, under the idea that the other world does not exist. However, one who has inferred the existence of the Self on the ground of the well-known fact that study of the scriptures dealing with injunctions and prohibitions becomes otherwise purposeless, who has no knowledge of the essential nature of the Self, and in whom has

arisen hankering for the results of actions—he faithfully engages in action. This is a matter of direct perception to all of us. Hence, the scriptures are not purposeless.

Objection: May it not be that the scriptures will become meaningless when, by noticing abstention from action in the case of men with discrimination, their followers too will abstain?

Reply: No, because discrimination arises in some rare person only. For, as at present, some rare one among many people comes to possess discrimination. Besides, fools do not follow one who has discrimination, because (their) engagement in action is impelled by defects such as attachment etc. And they are seen to get engaged in such acts as black magic. Moreover, engagement in action is natural. Verily has it been said (by the Lord), 'But it is Nature that acts' (5.14).

Therefore, the mundane state consists of nothing but ignorance, and is an object of perception (to the ignorant man who sees it) just as it appears to him. Ignorance and its effects do not belong to the Knower of the field, the Absolute. Moreover, false knowledge cannot taint the supreme Reality. For, water in a mirage cannot make a desert muddy with its moisture. Similarly, ignorance cannot act in any way on the Knower of the field. Hence has this been said, 'And understand Me to be knower of the field,' as also, 'Knowledge remains covered by ignorance' (5.15).

Objection: Then, what is this that even the learned say like the worldly people, 'Thus (88) am I,' 'This (89) verily belongs to Me'?

Reply: Listen. This is that learnedness which consists in seeing the field as the Self! On the contrary, should they realize the unchanging Knower of the field, then they will not crave for enjoyment or action with the idea, 'May this be mine.' Enjoyment and action are mere perversions. This being so, the ignorant man engages in action owing to his desire for results. On the other hand, in the case of an enlightened person who has realized the changeless Self, engagement in action is impossible because of the absence of desire for results. Hence, when the activities of the aggregate of body and organs cease, his withdrawal from action is spoken of in a figurative sense.

Some may have this other kind of learnedness: ‘The Knower of the field is God Himself; and the field is something different and an object of knowledge to the Knower of the field. But I am a mundane being, happy and sorrowful. And it is my duty to bring about the cessation of worldly existence through the knowledge of the field and the Knower of the field, and by continuing to dwell in His true nature after directly perceiving through meditation God, the Knower of the field.’ And he who, understands thus, and he who teaches that ‘he (the taught) is not the Knower of the field,’ and he who, being under such an idea, thinks, ‘I shall render meaningful the scriptures dealing with the worldly state and Liberation’—is the meanest among the learned. That Self-immolator, being devoid of any link with the traditional interpreters of the purport of the scriptures, misinterprets what is enjoined in the scriptures and imagines what is not spoken there, and thereby himself becoming deluded, befools others too. Hence, one who is not a knower of the traditional interpretation is to be ignored like a fool, though he may be versed in all the scriptures.

As for the objection that, if God be one with the knower of the field, He will then become a mundane being, and that, if the knowers of the fields are one with God, then from the non-existence of mundane beings will follow the absence of the mundane state,—these two objections have been refuted by admitting Knowledge and ignorance as having different characteristics.

Objection: How?

Reply: By saying that any defect imagined through ignorance does not affect the supreme Reality which is the substratum of that (imagination). In accordance with this, an illustration was cited that a desert is not made muddy by water in a mirage. Even the defect of the possibility of non-existence of the mundane state, consequent on the non-existence of individual souls, stands refuted by the explanation that the mundane state and the individual souls are imagined through ignorance.

Objection: The defect of mundane existence in the knower of the field consists in his being possessed of ignorance. And sorrowfulness etc. which are its products are matters of direct experience.

Reply: No, since whatever is known is an attribute of the field, therefore the knower—the knower of the field—cannot reasonably be tainted by the defects arising from it. Whatsoever blemish—not existing in the knower of the field—you attribute to It is logically an object of experience, and hence it is verily a quality of the field; not the quality of the knower of the field. Nor does the knower of the field become tainted thereby, because of knower cannot possibly have any conjunction with an object of knowledge. Should there be a conjunction, then there will be no possibility at all of its (the latter's) becoming a knowable. Oh! Sir, if being ignorant, sorrowful, etc. be qualities of the Self, how is it that they are directly perceived? Or how can they be qualities of the Knower of the field? If the conclusion be that all that is known constitutes the field, and that the one who knows is verily the knower of the field, then, to say that being ignorant, sorrowful, etc. are the qualities of the knower of the field and that they are directly perceived is a contradictory statement having only ignorance as its basis.

Here, (the opponent) asks: To whom does ignorance belong?

(The answer is that) it belongs verily to him by whom it is experienced!

Objection: In whom is it perceived?

Reply: Here the answer is: It is pointless to ask, 'In whom is ignorance experienced?'

Objection: How?

Reply: If ignorance be perceived (by you), then you perceive its possessor as well. Moreover, when that possessor of ignorance is perceived it is not reasonable to ask, 'In whom is it perceived?' For, when an owner of cattle is seen, the question, 'To whom do the cattle belong', does not become meaningful.

Objection: Well, is not the illustration dissimilar? Since, the cattle and their owner are directly perceived, their relation also is directly perceived. Hence the question is meaningless. Ignorance and its possessor are not directly perceived in that manner, in which case the question would have been meaningless.

Reply: What will it matter to you if you know the relation of ignorance with a person who is not directly perceived as possessed of ignorance?

Opponent: Since ignorance is a source of evil, therefore it should be got rid of.

Reply: He to whom ignorance belongs will get rid of it!

Opponent: Indeed, ignorance belongs to myself.

Reply: In that case, you know ignorance as also yourself who possess it?

Opponent: I know, but not through direct perception.

Reply: If you know through inference, then how is the connection (between yourself and ignorance) known? Surely it is not possible for you the knower to have at that time (90) the knowledge of the relation (of the Self) with ignorance which is an object of knowledge; (91) because the cognizer is then engaged in cognizing ignorance as an object. Besides, there cannot be someone who is a (separate) cognizer of the relation between the knower and ignorance, and a separate cognition of that (relation), for this would lead to infinite regress. If the knower and the relation between the knower and the thing known be cognizable, then a separate cognizer has to be imagined. Of him, again, another knower has to be imagined; of him again a separate cognizer would have to be imagined! Thus, an infinite regress becomes unavoidable.

Again, whether the knowable be ignorance or anything else, a knowable is verily a knowable; similarly, even a knower is surely a knower; he does not become a knowable. And when this is so, (92) nothing of the cognizer—the knower of the field—is tainted by such defects as ignorance, sorrowfulness, etc.

Objection: May it not be said that the (Self's) defect is surely this, that the field, which is full of defects, is cognized (by It)?

Reply: No, because it is the Immutable, which is consciousness, by nature, that is figuratively spoken of as the cognizer. It is just like figuratively attributing the act of heating to fire merely because of its (natural) heat. Just as it has been shown here by the Lord Himself that identification with action, cause and effect are absent in the Self, and that

action, cause, etc. are figuratively attributed to the Self owing to their having been superimposed (on It) through ignorance, so has it been shown by Him in various places: ‘He who thinks of this One as the killer...’ (2.19), ‘While actions are being done in every way by the *guṇas* of Nature’ (3.27), ‘The Omnipresent neither accepts anybody’s sin...’ (5.15), etc. It has been explained by us, too, in that very way, and in the following contexts also we shall explain accordingly.

Objection: Well, in that case, if identification with action, cause and effect be naturally absent in the Self, and if they be superimpositions through ignorance, then it amounts to this that actions are meant for being undertaken only by the ignorant, not by the enlightened.

Reply: It is true that it comes to this. This very fact we shall explain under the verse, ‘Since it is not possible for one who holds on to a body...’ (18.11). And, in the context dealing with the conclusion of the purport of the whole Scripture, we shall explain this elaborately under the verse, ‘...in brief indeed, O son of Kuntī, ... which is the supreme consummation of Knowledge’ (ibid. 50). It is needless here to expatiate further. Hence we conclude.

The next verse, ‘(Hear about)... what that field is,’ etc., summarizing the purport of the chapter dealing with the ‘field’ taught in the verses beginning from ‘This body...’ etc., is being presented. For it is proper to introduce briefly the subject-matter that is sought to be explained.

तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत्।
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु॥३॥

3. Hear from Me in brief about (all) that as to what that field is and how it is; what its changes are, and from what cause arises what effect; and who He is, and what His powers are.

Sṛṇu, hear, that is, having heard, understand; *me*, from Me, from My utterance; *samāsena*, in brief; about (all) *tat*, that—the true nature of the field and the Knower of the field, as they have been described; as to *yat*, what; *tat*, that—*tat* stands for that which has been indicated as ‘This body’ (in verse 1); *kṣetram*, field is, which has been referred to as ‘this’; *ca*, and; *yādṛk*, how it is along with its own qualities; *yadvikāri*, what its changes

are; *ca*, and; *yataḥ*, from what cause; arises *yat*, what effect (—*arises* is understood—); *saḥ ca yaḥ*, and who He, the Knower of the field indicated above, is; *ca*, and; *yat-prabhāvaḥ*, what His powers are. *Yat-prabhāvaḥ* is He who is possessed of the powers arising from the adjuncts. The word *ca* has been used (throughout) in the sense of *and*.

For making the intellect of the hearer interested the Lord praises that true nature of the field and the Knower of the field which is intended to be taught:

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक्।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः॥४॥

4. It has been sung of in various ways by the Ṛṣis, separately by the different kinds (93) of Vedic texts, and also by the rational and convincing sentences themselves which are indicative of and lead of Brahman.

Gītam, It has been sung of, spoken of; *bahudhā*, in various ways; *ṛṣibhiḥ*, by the Ṛṣis, by Vasiṣṭha and others; sung *pṛthāk*, separately; *vividhaiḥ*, by the different kinds of; *chandobhiḥ*, Vedic texts—*chandas* mean the Ṛg-veda etc; by them; *ca*, and; besides, *hetumadbhiḥ*, by the rational; and *viniścitaiḥ*, by the convincing, that is by those which are productive of certain knowledge—not by those which are in an ambiguous form; *brahma-sūtra-padaiḥ eva*, sentences themselves which are indicative of and lead to Brahman. Brahma-sūtras are the sentences indicative of Brahman. They are called *padāni* since Brahman is reached, known, through them. *By them indeed has been sung the true nature of the field and the Knower of the field* (—this is understood). The Self is verily known through such sentences as, 'The Self alone is to be meditated upon' (Bṛ. 1.4.7), which are indicative of and lead to Brahman.

To Arjuna who had become interested as a result of the eulogy, the Lord says:

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः॥५॥

5. The great elements, egoism, intellect and the Unmanifest itself; the ten organs and the one, and the five objects of the senses;

Mahābhūtāni, the great elements: Those elements which are great owing to their pervasion of all modifications, and which are subtle. As for the gross elements, they will be spoken of by the word *indriya-gocarāḥ*, objects of the senses.

Ahankāraḥ, egoism, which is the source of the great elements and consists of the idea of 'I'. *Buddhiḥ*, intellect, the source of egoism and consisting of the faculty of judgement; *ca*, and; its cause, the *avyaktam eva*, Unmanifest itself, the Undifferentiated, the power of God spoken of in, 'Māyā of Mine ... difficult to cross' (7.14). The word *eva* (itself) is used for singling out Prakṛti (Nature). The Prakṛti divided eightfold (94) is this much alone. The word *ca* (and) is used for joining the various categories.

The *daśa*, ten; *indriyāṇi*, organs : The five organs, ear etc., which are called sense-organs since they produce perception, and the (other) five organs—organ of speech, hands, etc.—which are called motor-organs since they accomplish actions. They are ten. *Ekam ca*, and the one—which is that?—the mind, the eleventh, possessed of the power of thinking etc. (see fn. on p. 144). *Ca*, and; the *pañca*, five; *indriya-gocarāḥ*, objects of the senses—such objects as sound etc. The followers of the Sāṅkhya call these which are such the twenty-four categories.

Thereafter, the Lord now says that even those qualities which the Vaiśeṣikas speak of as the attributes of the soul are certainly the attributes of the field, but not of the Knower of the field:

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्घातश्चेतना धृतिः।
एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम्॥६॥

6. Desire, repulsion, happiness, sorrow, the aggregate (of body and organs), sentience, fortitude—this field, together with its modifications, has been spoken of briefly.

Icchā, desire: Having experienced again an object of that kind which had given him the feeling of pleasure earlier, a man wants to have it under the idea that it is a source of pleasure. That is this desire which is an attribute of the internal organ, and is the 'field' since it is an object of knowledge.

So also *dveṣaḥ*, repulsion: Having experienced again an object of that kind which he had earlier felt as a cause of sorrow, he hates it. That is this repulsion, and it is surely the 'field' since it is an object of knowledge. Similarly, *sukham*, happiness—which is favourable, tranquil, having the quality of *sattva*—is the 'field' since it is an object of knowledge. *Duḥkham*, sorrow—which is by nature adverse—, that, too, is the 'field' since it is a knowable.

Saṅghātaḥ is the aggregate, the combination, of body and organs. *Cetanā*, sentience, is a state of the internal organ, manifest in that aggregate like fire in a heated lump of iron, and pervaded by an essence in the form of a semblance of Consciousness of the Self. That too is the 'field' because it is an object of knowledge. *Dhṛtiḥ*, fortitude, by which are sustained the body and organs when they get exhausted—that too is the 'field' because it is an object of knowledge. Desire etc. have been selected as suggestive of all the qualities of the internal organ.

The Lord concludes what has been said: *Etat*, this; *kṣetram*, field; *savikāram*, together with its modifications beginning from *mahat* (*buddhi*); has been *samāsena*, briefly; *udāhṛtam*, spoken of. That 'field' which was referred to as, 'This body is called the field' (1), and is constituted by the aggregate of the constituents of the field has been explained in its different forms beginning from the great elements etc. ending with fortitude.

The Knower of the field whose qualities are going to be described, and by realizing which Knower of the field along with His majesty Immortality follows—of Him, together with His attributes, the Lord Himself will narrate in the verse, 'I shall speak of that which is to be known' (12). But, for the present, the Lord enjoins the group of disciplines characterized as humility etc. which lead one to the knowledge of That (Knower of the field)—that group of humility etc. which are referred to by the word Knowledge since they lead to Knowledge, and owing to the existence of which one becomes appropriately competent for the realization of that Knowable, and being endued with which a monk is said to be steadfast in Knowledge:

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥७॥

7. Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury, forbearance, sincerity, service of the teacher, cleanliness, steadiness, control of body and organs;

Amānitvam, humility—the quality of a vain person is *mānitvam*, boasting about oneself; the absence of that is *amānitvam*. *Adambhitvam*, unpretentiousness—proclaiming one's own virtues is *dambhitvam*; the absence of that is *adambhitvam*. *Ahiṁsā*, non-injury, absence of cruelty towards creatures; *kṣāntiḥ*, forbearance, remaining undisturbed when offened by others; *ārjavam*, sincerity, uprightness, absence of crookedness; *ācārya-upāsanam*, service of the teacher, attending on the teacher who instructs in the disciplines for Liberation, through acts of service etc.; *śaucam*, cleanliness—washing away the dirt from the body with earth and water, and internally, removing the 'dirt' of the mind such as attachment etc. by thinking of their opposites; *sthairyam*, steadiness, perseverance in the path to Liberation alone; *ātma-vinigrahaḥ*, control of the aggregate of body and organs which is referred to by the word 'self', but which is inimical to the Self; restricting only to the right path that (aggregate) which naturally strays away in all directions.

Further,

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदु:खदोषानुदर्शनम्॥८॥

8. Non-attachment with regard to objects of the senses, and also absence of egotism; seeing the evil in birth, death, old age, diseases and miseries;

Vairāgyam, non-attachment, the attitude of dispassion; *indriya-artheṣu*, with regard to objects of the senses, viz. sound etc., with regard to seen or unseen objects of enjoyment; *eva ca*, and also; *anahaṅkāraḥ*, absence of egotism, absence of pride; *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣa-anudarśanam*, seeing the evil in birth, death, old age, diseases and miseries—seeing the evil in each one of them from 'birth' to 'miseries'. The evil in birth consists in lying in the womb and coming out of it; seeing, i.e. thinking, of it. Similarly, thinking of the evil in death; so also, seeing in old age the evil in the form of deprivation of intelligence, strength and vigour, and becoming an object of contempt. In the same way, thinking of the evil

in diseases like headache etc.; so also with regard to miseries arising from causes physical, natural and supernatural.

Or, *duḥkha-doṣa* may mean the miseries themselves which are evil. Seeing, as before, that (evil in the form of miseries) in birth etc.—birth is miserable, death is miserable, old age is miserable, diseases are miserable. Birth etc. are miserable because they cause misery; not that they are miseries in themselves. (95) Thus, when one thinks of the evil in the form of miseries in birth etc. dispassion arises with regard to the pleasures in the body, organs and objects. From that follows the tendency of the organs towards the indwelling Self for the realization of the Self. The seeing of the evil in the form of misery in birth etc. is called Knowledge because it thus becomes a cause of the rise of Knowledge.

Moreover,

असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥ ९ ॥

9. Non-attachment and absence of fondness with regard to sons, wives, homes, etc., and constant equanimity of the mind with regard to the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable;

Asaktiḥ, non-attachment—attachment means merely the liking for things arising from association; the absence of that is *asaktiḥ*; and *anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ*, absence of fondness—*abhiṣvaṅgaḥ* is in fact a special kind of attachment consisting of the idea of self-identification; as for instance, thinking 'I myself am happy,' or, 'I am sorrowful,' when somebody else is happy or unhappy, and thinking 'I live', or, 'I shall die,' when somebody else lives or dies—With regard to what? In answer the Lord says: *putra-dāra-gṛhādiṣu*, with regard to sons, wives, homes, etc. From the use of 'etc.' (it is understood that this fondness is) even with regard to others who are liked very much—retinue of servants and so on. And since both these (absence of attachment and fondness) lead to Knowledge, therefore they are called Knowledge.

And *nityam*, constant; *sama-cittatvam*, equanimity of mind, mental equipoise;—with regard to what?—*iṣṭa-aniṣṭa-upapattiṣu*, the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable; mental equipoise with regard to them,

always, without exception. One does not become happy on the attainment of the desirable, nor does he become angry on the attainment of the undesirable. And that constant equanimity of mind which is of this kind is Knowledge.

Further,

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥१०॥

10. And unwavering devotion to Me with single-minded concentration; inclination to repair into a clean place; lack of delight in a crowd of people;

Ca, and; *avyabhicāriṇī*, unwavering—not having any tendency to deviate; *bhaktiḥ*, devotion; *mayi*, to Me, to God; *ananya-yogena*, with single-minded concentration, with undivided concentration—*ananyayogaḥ* is the decisive, unswerving conviction of this kind: 'There is none superior to Lord Vāsudeva, and hence He alone is our Goal'; adoration with that. That too is Knowledge.

Vivikta-deśa-sevitvam, inclination to repair into a clean place—a place (*deśa*) naturally free (*vivikta*) or made free from impurity etc. and snakes, tigers, etc.; or, a place made solitary (*vivikta*) by being situated in a forest, on a bank of a river, or in a temple; one who is inclined to seek such a place is *vivikta-deśa-sevī*, and the abstract form of that is *vivikta-deśa-sevitvam*. Since the mind becomes calm in places that are indeed pure (or solitary), therefore meditation on the Self etc. occurs in pure (or solitary) places. Hence the inclination to retire into clean (or solitary) places is called Knowledge.

Aratiḥ, lack of delight, not being happy; *jana-saṁsadi*, in crowd of people—an assemblage, a multitude of people without culture, lacking in purity and immodest—, (but) not (so) in a gathering of pure and modest persons since that is conducive to Knowledge. Hence, lack of delight in an assembly of common people is Knowledge since it leads to Knowledge.

Besides,

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा॥११॥

11. Steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self, contemplation on the Goal of the knowledge of Reality—this is spoken of as Knowledge. Ignorance is that which is other than this.

Adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam, steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self: *adhyātma-jñānam* is the knowledge of the Self, etc.; constant dwelling in that is *nityatvam*.

Tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam, contemplating on the Goal of the knowledge of Reality: *Tattva-jñānam* is that (realization of Truth) which arises from the fruition of application to the disciplines like humility etc. which are the means to knowledge. Its Goal (*artha*) is Liberation, the cessation of mundane existence. Contemplation (*darśana*) on that is *tattva-jñāna-artha-darśanam*. For, when one engages in contemplation on the result of the knowledge of Reality, one gets the urge to undertake the disciplines which are its means.

Etat, this—those that have been stated from 'humility' etc. to 'contemplation on the Goal of the knowledge of Reality'; *proktam*, is spoken of; *iti*, as; *jñānam*, Knowledge, because they are meant to lead one to Knowledge. *Ajñānam*, ignorance; is *yat*, that which is; *anyathā*, other; *ataḥ*, than this—what has been stated above.

Contrarily, arrogance, pretentiousness, cruelty, revenge, insincerity, etc. are to be known as ignorance so that, since they are the cause of the origination of worldly existence, they can be avoided.

To the question as to what is to be known through the aforesaid Knowledge, the Lord says, 'I shall speak of that which is to be known,' etc.

Objection: Do not humility etc. constitute *yama* and *niyama* (96)? The Knowable is not known through them. For humility etc. are not seen to determine the nature of anything. Moreover, everywhere it is observed that whatever knowledge reveals its own object, that itself ascertains the nature of that *object of knowledge* (the knowable). Indeed, nothing else is known through a knowledge concerning some other object. As for instance, fire is not known through the knowledge of a pot.

Reply: This is not a defect, for we have said that they are called 'Knowledge' because they lead one to Knowledge, and because they are auxiliary causes of Knowledge.

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते।
अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते॥१२॥

12. I shall speak of that which is to be known, by realizing which one attains Immortality. The supreme Brahman is without any beginning. That is called neither being nor non-being.

Pravakṣyāmi, I shall speak of, fully describe just as it is; *tat*, that; *yat*, which; is *jñeyam*, to be known. In order to interest the hearer through inducement, the Lord speaks of what its result is: *Jñātvā*, by realizing; *yat*, which Knowable; *aśnute*, one attains; *amṛtam*, Immortality, that is; he does not die again. *Anādimat*, without beginning—one having a beginning (*ādi*) is *ādimat*; one not having a beginning is *anādimat*. What is that? The *param*, supreme, unsurpassable; *brahma*, Brahman, which is under discussion as the Knowable.

Here, some split up the phrase *anādimatparam* as *anādi* and *matparam* because, if the word *anādimat* is taken as a Bahuvrīhi compound, (97) then the suffix *mat* (*matup*) becomes redundant, which is undesirable. And they show a distinctive meaning: (Brahman is *anādi*, beginningless, and is) *matparam*, that of which I am the supreme (*para*) power called Vāsudeva. Truly, the redundance could be avoided in this way if that meaning were possible. But that meaning is not possible, because what is intended is to make Brahman known only through a negation of all attributes by saying, 'It is called neither being nor non-being.' It is contradictory to show a possession of a distinctive power and to negate attributes. Therefore, although *matup* and a *bahuvrīhi* compound convey the same meaning of 'possession', its (*matup's*) use is for completing the verse. (98)

Having aroused an interest through inducement by saying, 'The Knowable which has Immortality as its result is being spoken of by Me,' the Lord says: *Tat*, that Knowable; *ucyate*, is called; *na sat*, neither being; nor is it called *asat*, non-being.

Objection: After strongly girding up the loins and declaring with a loud voice, 'I shall speak of the Knowable,' is it not incongruous to say, 'That is called neither being nor non-being'?

Reply: No. What has been said is surely consistent.

Objection: How?

Reply: For in all the Upaniṣads, the Knowable, that is Brahman, has been indicated only by negation of all attributes—'Not this, not this' (Bṛ. 4.4.22), 'Not gross, not subtle' (op. cit. 3.3.8), etc.; but not as 'That is this', for It is beyond speech.

Objection: Is it not that a thing which cannot be expressed by the word 'being' does not exist? Likewise, if the Knowable cannot be expressed by the word 'being', It does not exist. And it is contradictory to say, 'It is the Knowable', and 'It cannot be expressed by the word "being".'

Counter-objection: As to that, not that It does not exist, because It is not the object of the idea, 'It is non-being.'

Objection: Do not all cognitions verily involve the idea of being or non-being? This being so, the Knowable should either be an object of a cognition involving the idea of existence, or it should be an object of a cognition involving the idea of non-existence.

Reply: No, because, by virtue of Its being supersensuous, It is not an object of cognition involving either of the two ideas. Indeed, any object perceivable by the senses, such as pot etc., can be either an object of cognition involving the idea of existence, or it can be an object of cognition involving the idea of non-existence. But this Knowable, being supersensuous and known from the scriptures, which are the sole means of (Its) knowledge, is not, like pot etc., an object of cognition involving either of the two ideas. Therefore It is called neither being nor non-being.

As for your objection that it is contradictory to say, 'It is the Knowable, but it is neither called being nor non-being,'—it is not contradictory; for the Upaniṣad says, 'That (Brahman) is surely different from the known and, again, It is above the unknown' (Ke. 1.4).

Objection: May it not be that even the Upaniṣad is contradictory in its meaning? May it not be (contradictory) as it is when, after beginning with the topic of a shed for a sacrifice, (99) it is said, 'Who indeed knows whether there exists anything in the other world or not!' (Tai. Saṁ. 6.1.1)?

Reply: No, since the Upaniṣad speaking of something that is different from the known and the unknown is meant for establishing an entity that must be realized. (100) But, '...whether there exists anything in the other world,' etc. is merely an *arthavāda (101)* connected with an injunction.

From reason also it follows that Brahman cannot be expressed by such words as being, non-being, etc. For, every word used for expressing an object, when heard by listeners, makes them understand its meaning through the comprehension of its significance with the help of genus, action, quality and relation; not in any other way, because that is not a matter of experience. To illustrate this: a cow, or a horse, etc. (is comprehended) through genus; cooking or reading, through action; white or black, through quality; a rich person or an owner of cows, through relation. But Brahman does not belong to any genus. Hence it is not expressible by words like 'being' etc.; neither is It possessed of any quality with the help of which It could be expressed through qualifying words, for It is free from qualities; nor can It be expressed by a word implying action, It being free from actions—which accords with the Upaniṣadic text, 'Partless, actionless, calm' (Śv. 6.19). Nor has It any relation, since It is one, non-dual, not an object of the senses, and It is the Self.

Therefore it is logical that It cannot be expressed by any word. And this follows from such Upaniṣadic texts as, 'From which, words turn back' (Tai. 2.4.1), etc.

Since the Knowable (Brahman) is not an object of the word or thought of 'being', there arises the apprehension of Its non-existence. Hence, for dispelling that apprehension by establishing Its existence with the help of the adjuncts in the form of the organs of all creatures, the Lord says:

सर्वत: पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वत: श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति॥१३॥

13. That (Knowable), which has hands and feet everywhere, which has eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, which has ears everywhere, exists in creatures by pervading them all.

Tat, That—the Knowable; *sarvataḥ-pāṇi-pādam*, which has hands and feet everywhere—.

The existence of the Knower of the field is revealed through the adjuncts in the form of the organs of all creatures. And the Knower of the field is spoken of as such because of the limiting adjuncts of the field. The field, too, is diversely differentiated as hands, feet, etc. All diversity in the Knower of the field, caused by the differences in the adjunct—the field—, is certainly unreal. Hence, by denying it, the nature of the Knowable has been stated in, 'That is called neither being nor non-being.' Although the unreal form is caused by the limiting adjuncts, still, for the comprehension of Its existence it is said, '(It) has hands and feet everywhere', etc., by assuming this as a quality of the Knowable. Thus, as is well known, there is a saying of the people versed in tradition, 'The Transcendental is described with the help of superimposition and its refutation'. Everywhere the hands, feet, etc., which are perceived as limbs of all bodies, perform their duties due to the presence of the power of the Knowable (Brahman). Thus the grounds for the inference of the existence of the Knowable are metaphorically spoken of as *belonging to* the Knowable. The others have to be explained similarly.

That Knowable has hands and feet everywhere. That which has eyes, heads, and mouths everywhere is *sarvatokṣi-śiro-mukham*. That which has ears everywhere is *sarvataḥ- śrutimat*: *śruti* means the organ of hearing; that which has it is *śruti-mat*. *Tiṣṭhati*, It exists, remains established; *loke*, in the multitude of creatures; *āvṛtya*, by pervading; *sarvam*, them all.

With this purpose in view, that as a result of the superimposition of the organs like hands, feet, etc., which are adjuncts, there may not be the misconception that the Knowable is possessed of them (adjuncts), the (next) verse is begun:

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।
असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च॥१४॥

14. Shining through the functions of all the organs, (yet) devoid of all the organs; unattached, and verily the supporter of all; without quality, and the perceiver of qualities;

Sarvendriya-guṇa-ābhāsam, shining through the functions of all the organs: By the use of the words *all the organs* are understood ears etc., known as the sense-organs and motor-organs, as also the internal organs—the intellect and the mind, for they are equally the limiting adjuncts of the Knowable. Besides, the organs of hearing etc. become the limiting adjuncts from the very fact of the internal organ becoming so. Hence, the Knowable gets expressed through determination, thinking, hearing, speaking, etc. that are the functions of all the organs, internal and external, which are the limiting adjuncts. In this way, It is manifest through the functions of all the organs. The idea is that, that Knowable appears to be as though active owing to the functions of all the organs, as it is said in the Upaniṣadic text, 'It thinks, as it were, and shakes, as it were' (Bṛ. 4.3.7).

For what reason, again, is It not perceived as being actually active? In answer the Lord says: It is *sarva-indriya-varitam*, devoid of all the organs, that is bereft of all the instruments of action. Hence the Knowable is not active through the functioning of the instruments of action. As for the Upaniṣadic verse, 'Without hands and feet He moves swiftly and grasps; without eyes He sees, without ears He hears' (Śv. 3.19), etc.—that is meant for showing that that Knowable has the power of adapting Itself to the functions of all the organs which are Its limiting adjuncts; but it is not meant to show that It really has such activity as moving fast etc. The meaning of that verse is like that of the Vedic text, 'The blind one discovered a gem' (Tai. Ār. 1.11). (102)

Since the Knowable is devoid of all the instruments of actions, therefore It is *asaktam*, unattached, devoid of all associations. Although It is of this kind, yet it is *ca eva*, also verily; the *sarva-bhṛt*, supporter of all. Indeed, everything has existence as its basis, because the idea of 'existence' is present everywhere. Verily, even mirage etc. do not occur without some basis. Therefore, It is *sarva-bhṛt*, the supporter of all—It upholds everything.

There can be this other means as well for the realization of the existence of the Knowable: *Nirguṇam*, without quality—the qualities are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; that Knowable is free from them; and yet It is the *guṇa-bhoktṛ*, perceiver of qualities; that is, that Knowable is the enjoyer and experiencer of the qualities, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which, assuming the forms of sound etc., transform themselves into happiness, sorrow, delusion, etc.

Further,

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत्॥१५॥

15. Existing outside and inside all beings; moving as well as non-moving, It is incomprehensible due to subtleness. So also, It is far away, and yet near.

Existing *bahiḥ*, outside—the word *bahiḥ* is used with reference to the body including the skin, which is misconceived through ignorance to be the Self, and which is itself taken as the boundary. Similarly, the word *antaḥ*, inside, is used with reference to the indwelling Self, making the body itself as the boundary. When 'outside' and 'inside' are used, there may arise the contingency of the non-existence of That in the middle. Hence this is said: *acaram caram eva ca*, moving as well as not moving—even that which appears as the body, moving or not moving, is nothing but the Knowable, in the same way as the appearance of a snake on a rope (is nothing but the rope).

If all empirical things, moving as also non-moving, be the Knowable, why should It not be known by all as such? In answer it is said: It is true that It shines through everything; still it is subtle like space. Therefore, although It is the Knowable, *tat*, It; is *avijñeyam*, incomprehensible to the ignorant people; *sūkṣmatvāt*, due to Its intrinsic subtleness. But to the enlightened It is ever known from the valid means of knowledge such as (the texts), 'All this is verily the Self' (Ch. 7.25.2), 'Brahman alone is all this' (Nṛ. Ut.7), etc. It is *dūrastham*, far away, since, to the unenlightened, It is unattainable even in millions of years. And *tat*, That; is *antike*, near, since It is the Self of the enlightened.

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम्।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च॥१६॥

16. And the Knowable, though undivided, appears to be existing as divided in all beings, and It is the sustainer of all beings as also the devourer and originator.

And further, *tat*, that; *jñeyam*, Knowable; though *avibhaktam*, undivided, remaining the same in all beings like space; *iva sthitam*, appears to be existing; as *vibhaktam*, divided; *bhūteṣu*, in all beings, because It is perceived as existing in the bodies themselves. And just as a rope etc. are with regard to a snake etc. that are falsely imagined, similarly that Knowable is *bhūtabhartṛ*, the sustainer of all beings, since It sustains all during the period of their existence; *grasiṣṇu*, the devourer, at the time of dissolution; and *prabhaviṣṇu*, the originator, at the time of creation.

Further, if the Knowable is not perceived though existing everywhere, then It is darkness? No! What then?

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम्॥१७॥

17. That is the Light even of the lights; It is spoken of as beyond darkness. It is Knowledge, the Knowable, and the Known. It exists specially (103) in the hearts of all.

Tat, that Knowable; is the *jyotiḥ*, Light; *api*, even; *jyotiṣām*, of the lights—of the sun etc. For the lights like the sun etc. shine because they are enkindled by the light of consciousness of the Self, as is known from Upaniṣadic texts like, 'Illumined by whose light the sun shines' (Tai. Bṛ. 3.12.9.7), 'By Its light all this shines variously' (Śv. 6.14), and from the Smṛti also, as here (in the *Gītā*) itself: 'That light in the sun…' (15.12), etc.

It is *ucyate*, spoken of as; *param*, beyond, untouched by; *tamasaḥ*, darkness, ignorance. For cheering up anyone who may become disheartened by thinking that Knowledge etc. is difficult to attain, the Lord says: It is *jñānam*, Knowledge—humility etc. (verse 7, etc.); *jñeyam*, the Knowable, which has been spoken of in, 'I shall speak of that which is to be known' (12); and *jñāna-gamyam*, the Known. The Knowable itself is referred to as

jñāna-gamyam, when after being known, It becomes the result of Knowledge. But when It is an object to be known, It is called *jñeyam*. All these three which are such, *viṣṭhitam*, specially exist; *hṛdi*, in the hearts, in the intellects; *sarvasya*, of all, of all creatures. For these three are, indeed, perceived there.

This verse is begun for concluding the topic under discussion:

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः।
मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते॥१८॥

18. Thus has been spoken of in brief the field as also Knowledge and the Knowable. By understanding this My devotee becomes qualified for My state.

Iti, thus; *uktam*, has been spoken — commencing from ‘I shall speak of that which is to be known’ (12) and ending with ‘It is spoken of as beyond darkness’ (17); *samāsataḥ*, in brief; the *kṣetram*, field—beginning with the ‘great elements’ and ending with ‘fortitude’ (5,6); *tathā*, as also; *jñānam*, Knowledge—beginning from ‘humility’ (7) and ending with ‘contemplation on the Goal of the knowledge of Reality’ (11); and the *jñeyam*, Knowable.

All this has been stated by way of summarizing the purport of the Vedas and the *Gītā*. Who is fit for this true knowledge? The answer is: *madbhaktaḥ*, My devotee, who attributes the fact of being the Self of all to Me who am God, Vāsudeva, the Omniscient, the supreme Teacher, (and) whose conviction has been saturated with the idea that whatever he sees, hears or touches, all that verily is Lord Vāsudeva. *Vijñāya*, by understanding; *etat*, this, the aforesaid true knowledge; he *upa-padyate*, becomes qualified; *mad-bhāvāya*, for My State (*bhāva*)—the State of being the supreme Self; for that State of Mine. He attains Liberation.

There in the Seventh Chapter have been presented the two aspects [104] of God, viz. the higher and the lower, characterized as the field and the Knower of the field. And it has also been said, ‘(Understand thus) that all things have these as their source’ (7.6). The explanation as to how creatures have the two aspects, the field and the Knower of the field, as their source is now being stated:

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसम्भवान्॥१९॥

19. Know both Nature and also the individual soul (105) to be verily without beginning; know the modifications as also the qualities as born of Nature.

Viddhi, know; *ubhau*, both; *prakṛtim* Nature; and also the *puruṣam*, individual soul;—these two; Nature and the soul, the aspects of God—to be *api*, verily; *anādī*, without beginning. Those two that have no beginning (*ādi*), are *anādī*. Since the godhood of God is eternal, therefore it is logical that even His aspects also should have eternality. For God's godhood consists verily in having the two aspects. Those two aspects through which God becomes the cause of creation, continuance and dissolution of the Universe, and which are beginningless, are the sources of mundane existence.

Some interpret the phrase *anādī* in the *tatpuruṣa (106)* sense of *na ādī*, *not primeval* (*not cause*). (According to them) thereby indeed is established the causality of God. Again, if Nature and soul themselves be eternal, the mundane existence would surely be their creation, and the causality of the mundane existence would not be God's.

That is wrong because, there being nothing to rule over before the emergence of Nature and soul, there will arise the contingency of God ceasing to be God! And if the mundane state be uncaused (107) there arises the contingency of the absence of Liberation, (108) the scriptures becoming useless, and the absence of bondage and freedom. On the other hand, all these become justifiable if God and the two aspects be eternal.

How?

Viddhi, know; the *vikārān*, modifications that will be spoken of—the intellect etc., the body and the organs; *ca eva*, as also; *guṇān*, the qualities (*sattva* etc.)—manifest in the form of the mental states of happiness, sorrow and attachment; as *prakṛti-sambhavān*, born of Nature. Nature, Māyā, is the power of God, which is the cause of the modifications and which consists of the three qualities. Those modifications and qualities, which have that

Nature as their source,—know those modifications and qualities as ‘born of Nature’, as transformations of Nature.

Which again, are those modifications and qualities born of Nature?

कार्यकरणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते॥२०॥

20. With regard to the source of body and organs, Nature is said to be the cause. The soul is the cause so far as enjoyership of happiness and sorrow is concerned.

Kārya-karaṇa-kartṛtve, with regard to the source of body and organs: *Kārya* is the body, and *karaṇa* are the thirteen (109) organs existing in it. Here, by the word *kārya* are understood the aforesaid elements that produce the body as also the objects which are modifications born of Nature. And since the qualities—which are born of Nature and manifest themselves as happiness, sorrow and delusion—are dependent on the organs, (therefore) they are implied by the word *karaṇa*, organs. The *kartṛtvam*, (lit) agentship, with regard to these body and organs consists in being the source of the body and organs. With regard to this source of the body and organs, *prakṛtiḥ*, Nature; *ucyate*, is said to be; the *hetuḥ*, cause, in the sense of being the originator. Thus, by virtue of being the source of body and organs, Nature is the cause of mundane existence.

Even if the reading be *kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtva*, *kārya* (effect, modification) will mean anything that is the transformation of something; and *kāraṇa* (cause) will be that which becomes transformed. So the meaning of the compound will be: ‘with regard to the source of the effect and the cause’.

Or, *kārya* means the sixteen (110) modifications, and *kāraṇa* means the seven (111) transformations of Nature. They themselves are called effect and cause. So far as the agentship with regard to these is concerned Nature is said to be the cause, because of the same reason of being their originator.

As to how the soul can be the cause of mundane existence is being stated: *Puruṣaḥ*, the soul, the empirical being, the knower of the field—all these are synonymous; is the *hetuḥ*, cause; *bhoktṛtve*, so far as enjoyership,

the fact of being the perceiver; *sukha-duḥkhānām*, of happiness and sorrow—which are objects of experience, is concerned.

How, again, is it asserted with respect to Nature and soul that, they are the causes of mundane existence by virtue of this fact of their (respectively) being the source of body and organs, and the perceiver of happiness and sorrow?

As to this the answer is being stated: How can there be any mundane existence if there be no modification of Nature in the form of body and organs, happiness and sorrow, and cause and effect, and there be no soul, the conscious being, to experience them? On the other hand, there can be mundane existence when there is a contact, in the form of ignorance, between Nature—modified in the form of body and organs, and cause and effect as an object of experience and the soul opposed to it as the experiencer. Therefore it was reasonable to have said that, Nature and soul become the cause of mundane existence by (respectively) becoming the originators of the body and organs, and the perceiver of happiness and sorrow.

What again is this that is called worldly existence? Worldly existence consists in the experience of happiness and sorrow; and the state of mundane existence of the soul consists in its being the experiencer of happiness and sorrow.

It has been asserted that the state of mundane existence of the soul consists in its being the experiencer of happiness and sorrow. How does it come about? This is being answered:

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान्।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु॥२१॥

21. Since the soul is seated in Nature, therefore it experiences the qualities born of Nature. Contact with the qualities is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.

Hi, since; *puruṣaḥ*, the soul, the experiencer; is *prakṛtisthaḥ*, seated in Nature, which is characterized as ignorance and gets transformed into body and organs, that is, (since the soul) has become identified with Nature;

therefore, *bhuṅkte*, (112) it enjoys, that is experiences; *guṇān*, the qualities —manifest as happiness, sorrow and delusion; *prakṛtijān*, born of Nature, thinking thus, 'I am happy, sorrowful, deluded, learned.' Even though ignorance continues as a cause, still the main cause of worldly existence, of birth, is the contact, the self-identification, with the qualities—happiness, sorrow, and delusion—when they are experienced, as is affirmed by the Upaniṣadic text, 'What it desires, it resolves' (Bṛ. 4.4.5) (113). That very fact is stated here: *Guṇasaṅgaḥ*, contact with the qualities; is *kāraṇam*, the cause; *asya*, of its, the soul's, the experiencer's; *sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*, births in good and evil wombs. Self-identification with the qualities is the cause of the experience of births in good and evil wombs. Or the meaning is, 'Self-identification with the qualities is the cause or its worldly existence through birth in good and evil wombs,' where the words 'of worldly existence' have to be supplied. The good wombs are the wombs of gods and others; evil wombs are the wombs of beasts etc. From the force of the context it is to be understood that there is no contradiction in including even human wombs among 'good and evil wombs'.

It amounts to saying that ignorance—called 'being seated in Nature'—and the contact with, that is the desire for, the qualities are the causes of worldly existence. And this is said so that they can be avoided. And in the scripture *Gītā* it is a well-known fact that knowledge and dispassion, accompanied with renunciation, are the causes of removing this (ignorance and self-identification with the qualities). That knowledge about the field and the Knower of the field, too, has been presented earlier. This has also been said in, '…by realizing which one attains Immortality' (12), etc., through the process of refutation of elements alien (to the Self) and superimposition of qualities belonging to others (that are not the Self). (114)

A direct presentation is again being made of that (knowledge) itself:

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः॥२२॥

22. He who is the Witness, the Permitter, the Sustainer, the Experiencer, the great Lord, and who is also spoken of as the transcendental Self is the supreme Person in this body.

He who is the *upadraṣṭā*, Witness, who while staying nearby does not Himself become involved: As when the priests and the performer of a sacrifice remain engaged in duties connected with the sacrifice, there is another (called Brahmā) remaining nearby who is unengaged, is versed in the science of sacrifices and witnesses the merit or demerit of the activities of the priest and the performer of the sacrifice, similarly, He who is not engaged in the activities of and is different from the body and organs, who has characteristics other than theirs, and is the proximate (*upa*) observer (*draṣṭā*) of the body and organs engaged in their duties, is the *upa-draṣṭā*.

Or: The observers are the body, eyes, mind, intellect and the soul. Of them the body is the external observer. Proceeding inwards from that (body), the Self is the inmost as also the proximate observer, compared with which there is no other higher and inner observer. The Self, because of being the most proximate observer, is the *upadraṣṭā*. Or, It is the *upadraṣṭā* since, like the onlooker of a sacrifice, It witnesses everything.

And He is the *anu-mantā*, Permitter: *Anumananam*, approval, means satisfaction with those performers (viz. body and organs) as also their performances. The agent of that (approval) is the *anumantā*. Or, He is the *anumantā* since, even though Himself not engaged in the activities of the body and organs, He appears to be favourably disposed towards and engaged in them. Or, He is the *anumantā* because, when the body and organs are engaged in their own functions, He remains as a witness and never dissuades them.

It is the *bhartā*, Sustainer: *Bharaṇam* means the continuance in their own state of the body, organs, mind and intellect, which reflect consciousness and have become aggregated owing to the need of serving the purpose (115) of some other entity, viz. the conscious Self. And that (continuance) is verily due to the consciousness that is the Self. In this sense the Self is said to be the Sustainer.

It is the *bhoktā*, Experiencer: As heat is by fire, similarly, the experiences of the intellect—in the form of happiness, sorrow and delusion in relation to all objects—, when born as though permeated by the consciousness that is the Self, are manifested differently by the Self which

is of the nature of eternal Consciousness. In this sense the Self is said to be the Experiencer.

He is *maheśwaraḥ*, the great God, because, as the Self of all and independent, He is the great Ruler.

He is *paramātmā*, the transcendental Self, because He is the Self which has the characteristics of being the supreme Witness etc. of (all) those—beginning from the body and ending with the intellect—which are imagined through ignorance to be the indwelling Self. He is *api ca*, also; *uktaḥ*, spoken of, referred to, in the Upaniṣads; *iti*, as, with the words; 'He is the indwelling One, the *paramātmā*, the transcendental Self.' (116) Where is He? The *paraḥ*, supreme; *puruṣaḥ*, Person, who is higher than the Unmanifest and who will be spoken of in, 'But different is the supreme Person who is spoken of as the transcendental Self' (15.17); is *asmin*, in this; *dehe*, body.

What has been presented in, '…also understand Me to be the Knower of the field' (2), has been explained and concluded.

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते॥२३॥

23. He who knows thus the Person and Nature along with the qualities will not be born again, in whatever way he may live.

Saḥ yaḥ, he who; *vetti*, knows, in the manner described; the *puruṣam*, Person, that Self possessed of the characteristics stated above, as 'I myself (am That)'; and knows *prakṛtim*, Nature as described above, which is characterized as ignorance; to have been eradicated by Knowledge, *saha*, along with; *guṇaiḥ*, the qualities which are its modifications; *na abhijāyate*, will not be born; *bhūyaḥ*, again—after the fall of this body of the man of realization, he does not become born again for (taking) another body, that is he does not take up another body; *sarvathā api*, in whatever way; *vartamānaḥ*, he may live. From the word *api* it is understood that, it goes without saying that one who is firm in his own duty is not reborn.

Objection: Though it has been said that there is absence of rebirth after the dawn of Knowledge, still it is not illogical that actions done (in the present life) before the rise of Knowledge and those done subsequently, as

also those done in the many past lives, should be destroyed without yielding their results? Hence there should be three births! For destruction of acquired merit is not logical, to the same extent as actions that have produced the present birth and are yielding their proper results (cannot be destroyed). Besides, it is not understood that actions have distinctions (117). Therefore, the actions of the three kinds, without exception, will produce three births or they all collectively will produce one birth. Otherwise, if the acquired merits become destroyed, it will lead to loss of faith everywhere as well as to the purposelessness of scriptures. Therefore it has been illogical to say, 'he will not be born again.'

Reply: No, for the burning away of all the actions of the man of knowledge has been stated in hundreds of Upaniṣadic texts such as:

'And all one's actions become dissipated' (Mu. 2.2.8);

'Anyone who knows (that supreme) Brahman, becomes Brahman' (op. cit. 3.2.9);

'For him the delay is for so long only (as he does not become freed)' (Ch. 6.14.2);

'As the fibres at the tip of a blade of reed (become completely burnt...,' so) all actions 'get completely burnt' (op. cit. 5.24.3).

Here too the burning of all actions has been stated in, 'as a blazing fire reduces pieces of wood to ashes,...'etc. (4.37), and He will also say so (later) (118).

This accords with reason also. Verily, actions, which arise from the seed of evils (119) like ignorance and desires, germinate the sprout of rebirth. Here also it has been said by the Lord in various places that actions which are associated with egoism and desire for results bear fruits, not the others. And there is also the verse: 'As seeds burnt by fire do not germinate, so also the Self does not acquire another body due to evils that have been burnt by Knowledge (cf. Mbh. Va. 199. 107).

Objection: It may be granted for the present that actions performed after the rise of Knowledge are burnt by Knowledge, since they coexist with Knowledge. But the burning away of actions done in this life prior to the rise of Knowledge and those done in the many past lives is not reasonable.

Reply: No, because of the qualification, 'all actions' (4.37).

Objection: May it not be that 'all actions' means those that are undertaken after Illumination?

Reply: No, for there is no reason for the restriction (of the meaning). On the other hand, as for the statement, 'just as actions that have produced the present birth and are already active in producing their results do not get dissipated even after Illumination, similarly it is not reasonable that actions which have not commenced producing their results should get dissipated,'—that is wrong.

Objection: Why?

Reply: Since they have already begun producing results, like an arrow that has been shot: As an arrow, freed earlier from a bow for hitting a target, even after piercing through the target comes to a stop only after falling down as a result of the dissipation of its initial momentum, similarly, actions that produced the (present) body verily continue, even after fulfilling the purpose of maintaining the body, to exist as before until the dissipation of their inherent tendencies. But, as that very arrow, when it has not acquired the momentum needed for action, when it has not been shot even though fixed on the bow, can be withdrawn, similarly, actions which have not begun yielding their results may be rendered unproductive by Knowledge, even while existing in their receptacle. (120) Hence, it is established that, it has been reasonable to state that on the fall of the present body of an enlightened person, 'He is not born again.'

Here are being presented these meditation etc. which are the alternative means for the realization of the Self:

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे॥२४॥

24. Through meditation some realize the Self in (their) intellect with the help of the internal organ; others through Sāṅkhya-yoga, and others through Karma-yoga.

Dhyānena, through meditation: Meditation means contemplation (on the Self) after withdrawing into the mind with concentration the organs of hearing etc. from the objects like sound etc., and then withdrawing the mind

into the indwelling conscious Self. Thus, from the citation of such illustrations as, 'the crane meditates, as it were', 'the earth meditates, as it were', 'the mountains meditate, as it were' (Ch. 7.6.1), it follows that meditation is a constant and uninterrupted current of thought like a line of pouring oil. Through that meditation, *kecit*, some yogīs; *paśyanti*, realize; the indwelling conscious *ātmānam*, Self; *ātmani*, in (their) intellect; *ātmanā*, with the help of the internal organ that has been purified by meditation.

Anye, others; *sāṅkhyena yogena*, through Sāṅkhya-yoga: Sāṅkhya means thinking, 'These qualities, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, are objects of my perception; I am the Self, distinct from them, a witness of their functions, eternal and different from the qualities.' This Sāṅkhya is Yoga. (121) Through that *they realize the Self with the help of the internal organ*. This is how it is to be construed.

And *anye*, others; *karma-yogena*, through Karma-yoga—action itself being the Yoga: Action performed with the idea of dedication to God is figuratively called Yoga since it leads to Yoga. (Others realize) with the help of that (action), through purification of the mind and rise of Knowledge. (122)

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वाऽन्येभ्य उपासते।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः॥२५॥

25. Others, again, who do not know thus, take to thinking after hearing from others; they, too, who are devoted to hearing, certainly overcome death.

Anye tu, others again; *ajānantaḥ*, who do not know the Self as described above; *evam*, thus, even in one of these alternative ways; *upāsate*, take to thinking, take to reflection, being imbued with faith; *śrutvā*, after hearing; *anyebhyaḥ*, from others, from the teachers, having been told, 'Think only of this.' *Te api ca*, they, too; *śruti-parāyaṇāḥ*, who are devoted to hearing, to whom hearing is the supreme course, the best discipline for starting on the path to Liberation, that is, those who, themselves lacking in discrimination, accept only others' advice as most authoritative; *eva*,

certainly; *ati-taranti*, overcome; *mṛtyum*, death, that is the mundane existence which is fraught with death.

The implication is; It goes without saying that those discriminating people who are independent in the application of the valid means of knowledge, cross over death.

That the knowledge of the identity of the Knower of the field and God leads to Liberation has been stated in, '…by realizing which one attains Immortality' (12). For what reason is it so? To point out that reason the (next) verse is begun:

यावत्सञ्जायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ॥२६॥

26. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, whatever object, moving or non-moving, comes into being, know that to be from the association of the field and the Knower of the field!

Bharatarṣabha, O scion of the Bharata dynasty; *yāvat kiñcit*, whatever; *sattvam*, object;—as to whether they are without exception, the Lord says—*sthāvara-jangamam*, moving or non-moving; *sañjāyate*, comes into being; *viddhi*, know; *tat*, that; as originating *kṣetra-kṣetrajña-saṁyogāt*, from the association of the field and the Knower of the field.

Objection: What, again, is meant by this 'association of the field and the Knower of the field'? Since the Knower of the field is partless like space, therefore Its conjunction with the field cannot be a kind of relationship like coming together of a rope and a pot through the contact of their parts. Nor can it be an intimate and inseparable relation as between a thread and a cloth, since it is not admitted that the field and the Knower of the field are mutually related by way of being cause and effect.

Reply: The answer is: The association of the field and the Knower of the field—which are the object and the subject, respectively, and are of different natures—is in the form of superimposition of each on the other as also of their qualities, as a consequence of the absence of discrimination between the real natures of the field and the Knower of the field. This is like the association of a rope, nacre, etc. with the superimposed snake,

silver, etc. owing to the absence of discrimination between them. This association of the field and the Knower of the field in the form of superimposition is described as false knowledge. After having known the distinction between and the characteristics of the field and the Knower of the field according to the scriptures, and having separated, like a stalk from the Muñjagrass, the above-described Knower of the field from the field whose characteristics have been shown earlier, he who realizes the Knowable (that is the Knower of the field)—which, in accordance with 'That is neither called being nor non-being' (12), is devoid of all distinctions created by adjuncts—as identical with Brahman; and he who has the firm realization that the field is surely unreal like an elephant created by magic, a thing seen in a dream, an imaginary city seen in the sky, etc., and it appears as though real—for him false knowledge becomes eradicated, since it is opposed to the right knowledge described above.

Since the cause of his rebirth has been eliminated, therefore what was said in, 'He who knows thus the Person and Nature along with the qualities…', that the man of realization is not born again (23), has been a reasonable statement.

In 'He … will not be born again' (23) has been stated the result of right knowledge, which is the absence of birth owing to the destruction of ignorance etc., the seeds of worldly existence. The cause of birth, viz. the association of the field and the Knower of the field brought about by ignorance, has also been stated. Hence, although right knowledge, which is the remover of that ignorance, has been spoken of, still it is being stated over again in other words:

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति॥२७॥

27. He sees who sees the supreme Lord as existing equally in all beings, and as the Imperishable among the perishable.

Saḥ, he; *paśyati*, sees; *yaḥ*, who; *paśyati*, sees;—whom?—*parameśwaram*, the supreme Lord—the Lord who is supreme as compared with the body, organs, mind, intellect, the Unmanifest and the individual soul; as *tiṣṭhantam*, existing, having His presence; *samam*, equally, without

distinction;— where?—*sarveṣu*, in all; *bhūteṣu*, beings, all living things from Brahmā to the non-moving;—he who sees Him existing equally in all living things. The Lord specifies them by the word *vinaśyatsu*, among the perishable; and He also specifies Him, the supreme Lord, by the word *avinaśyantam*, the Imperishable. This is meant for showing the absolute difference between the living things and God.

How?

For, all the modifications (123) of an existing thing have as their root that modification of an existing thing described as birth. All other modifications of existing things that follow birth end with destruction. After destruction there is no modification of an existing thing, because the object itself becomes non-existent. Indeed, qualities can exist so long as the thing qualified exists. Therefore, by the reiteration of the absence of the last modification of an existing thing, all its preceding modifications become negated along with their effects. Hence it is established that the supreme Lord is very greatly different from all beings, and is also Unconditioned (124) and One.

He sees who thus sees the supreme Lord as described.

Objection: Is it not that all people see? What is the need of specification?

Reply: True, they see; but they see contrarily! Hence the Lord specifies, 'He alone sees'. As in comparison with one who, suffering from the (eye) disease called Timira, sees many moons, the person who sees one moon is distinguished by saying, 'He alone sees,' similarly, here as well, the man who sees the one undivided Self as described above is distinguished from those who contrarily see many and differentiated selves, by saying 'He alone sees'. Others, though seeing, do not see because they see contrarily like the person who sees many moons. This is the meaning.

The above-described true knowledge has to be praised by stating its result. Hence the verse begins:

समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम्।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम्॥२८॥

28. Since by seeing equally God who is present alike everywhere he does not injure the Self by the Self, therefore he attains the supreme Goal.

Hi, since; *paśyan*, by seeing, by realizing; *samam*, equally; *īśvaram*, God, that is, (by realizing Him) as described in the immediately preceding verse; who is *samavasthitam*, present alike; *sarvatra*, everywhere, in all beings;—what follows from seeing equally?—he *na*, does not; *hinasti*, injure; his own *ātmānam*, Self; *ātmanā*, by the Self, by his own Self; *tataḥ*, therefore, as a result of that non-injuring; *yāti*, he attains; the *parām*, supreme; *gatim*, Goal, called Liberation.

Objection: Is it not that no creature whatsoever injures himself by himself? Why do you refer to an irrelevant thing by saying, 'He does not injure …', which is like saying, 'Fire should neither be lit on the earth nor in the sky,' etc.?

Reply: This defect does not arise, because it is logical with reference to an unenlightened person's ignoring the Self. For, all unillumined people ignore the very well-known Self which is manifest and directly perceptible, and regard the non-Self as the Self. By performing righteous and unrighteous acts they destroy even that self which has been accepted, and adopt another new self. And destroying even that, they take up another. Similarly, destroying even that, they adopt another. In this way they destroy the self that had been accepted successively. Thus, all unillumined persons are destroyers of the Self. But that which is the Self in reality, even that remains as though destroyed for ever by ignorance, because of the absence of any benefit from Its presence. So, all unenlightened persons are, verily, destroyers of the Self.

On the contrary, the other person who has realized the Self as described does not injure in either way (125) the Self by his own Self. Therefore he attains the supreme Goal, that is, the result stated above comes to him.

Lest it be doubted that what was said in, 'seeing equally God who is present in all beings, he does not injure the Self by the Self', is improper with regard to the selves which are diverse according to the differences created by the variety in their own qualities and actions, the Lord says:

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः।

यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति॥२९॥

29. And he who sees actions as being done in various ways by Nature itself, and also the Self as the non-agent,—he sees.

And *yaḥ*, he who; *paśyati*, sees, realizes; *karmāṇi*, actions, those performed through speech, mind and body; as *kriyamāṇāni*, being done, being accomplished; *sarvaśaḥ*, in various ways; *prakṛtyā*, by Nature—Nature is God's Māyā consisting of the three qualities, as is said in the Upaniṣadic text, 'However, know Māyā as Nature' (Śv. 4.10); by that Nature; *eva*, itself—not by the other (126) which transforms itself in the form of cause and effects such as Mahat etc.; *tathā*, and also; *ātmānam*, the Self, the Knower of the field; as *akartāram*, the non-agent, devoid of all adjuncts; *saḥ*, he; *paśyati*, sees—he is the one who has realized the supreme Reality. This is the idea. What is implied is that there is no valid proof about differences in the Non-agent who is devoid of qualities and is unconditioned like space.

The Lord elaborates again in other words that very true knowledge:

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा॥३०॥

30. When one realizes that the state of diversity of living things is rooted in the One, and that their manifestation is also from That, then one becomes identified with Brahman.

Yadā, when, at the time when; *anupaśyati*, one realizes—having reflected in accordance with the instructions of the scriptures and the teachers, one realizes as a matter of one's own direct experience that 'All this is but the Self' (Ch. 7.25.2); that *bhuta-pṛthak-bhāvam*, the state of diversity of living things; is *ekastham*, rooted in the One, existing in the one Self; and their *vistāram*, manifestation, origination; *tataḥ, eva*, is also from That—when he realizes that origination in such diverse ways as, 'the vital force is from the Self, hope is from the Self, memory (127) is from the Self, space is from the Self, fire is from the Self, water is from the Self, coming into being and withdrawal are owing to the Self, food is from the Self' (op.

cit. 7.26.1); *tadā*, then, at that time; *brahma sampadyate*, one becomes identified with Brahman Itself. This is the import.

If the same Self be the Self in all the bodies, then there arises the possibility of Its association with their defects. Hence this is said:

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते॥३१॥

31. Being without beginning and without qualities, O son of Kuntī, this immutable, supreme Self does not act, nor is It affected (128), although existing in the body.

Anāditvāt, being without beginning: *Adiḥ* means cause; that which has no cause is *anādiḥ*. That which has a cause undergoes loss of its own characteristics. But this One, being causeless, has no parts. This being so, It does not suffer loss.

So also, *nirguṇatvāt*, being without qualities: Indeed, It is only something possessing qualities that perishes owing to the loss of its qualities. But this One, being without qualities, does not perish. Hence, *ayam*, this; *paramātmā*, supreme Self; is *avyayaḥ*, immutable. It suffers no depletion. Therefore It is immutable. Since this is so, therefore, *api*, although; *śarīra-sthaḥ*, existing in the body—since the perception of the Self occurs in the bodies, It is said to be 'existing in the body'; even then, It *na*, does not; *karoti*, act. From the very fact that It does not act, It *na*, is not; *lipyate*, affected by the result of any action. For, one who is an agent of action becomes affected by its result. But this One is not an agent. Hence It is not affected by any result. This is the meaning.

Objection: Who is it, again, that acts in the body and becomes affected? On the one hand, if there be some embodied being other than the supreme Self who acts and becomes affected, then it has been improper to say in, 'And also understand Me to be the Knower of the field,' etc., that the Knower of the field and God are one. Again, if there be no embodied being who is different from God, then it has to be stated who is it that acts and gets affected. Or it has to be asserted that the supreme One does not exist. (129)

Thus, since the Upaniṣadic philosophy as stated by the Lord is in every way difficult to understand and difficult to explain, it has therefore been abandoned by the Vaiśeṣikas, the Sāṅkhyas, the Jainas and the Buddhists.

Reply: As to that, the following refutation has been stated by the Lord Himself in, 'But it is Nature that acts' (5.14). Indeed, Nature, which is nothing but ignorance, acts and becomes affected. In this way empirical dealing becomes possible; but in reality it does not occur in the one supreme Self.

It has been accordingly shown by the Lord in various places that there is no duty to be performed by those who adhere to this philosophy of discriminating knowledge of the supreme Reality, who are steadfast in Knowledge, who have spurned actions arising out of ignorance, and who are mendicants belonging to the highest Order of monks.

The Lord cites an illustration to show like what It does not act and is not affected:

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते॥३२॥

32. As the all-pervading space is not defiled, because of its subtlety, similarly the Self, present everywhere in the body (130), is not defiled.

Yathā, as; *sarva-gatam*, the all-pervading; *ākāśam*, space;—though pervasive, still, *na upalipyate*, is not defiled, does not come into contact; *saukṣmyāt*, because of its subtlety; *tathā*, similarly; *ātmā*, the Self; *avasthitaḥ*, present, *sarvatra*, everywhere; *dehe*, in the body; *na*, is not; *upalipyate*, defiled.

Further,

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत॥३३॥

33. As the single sun illumines this whole world, similarly, O descendant of the Bharata dynasty, the Knower of the field illumines the whole field.

Yathā, as; *ekam*, the one; *raviḥ*, sun; *prakāśayati*, illumines; *imam*, this; *kṛtsnam*, whole; *lokam*, world *tathā*, similarly;—who?—*kṣetrī*, the Knower of the field, that is the supreme Self, though one; *prakāśayati*, illumines; *kṛtsnam*, the whole; *kṣetram*, field, from the 'great elements' to 'fortitude' (cf. 5-6).

Here the illustration of the sun serves to highlight two aspects of the Self, viz. that, like the sun, the Self is one in all the fields, and that It remains unaffected.

This verse is meant for summarizing the idea of the whole of this chapter:

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम्॥३४॥

34. Those who know thus through the eye of wisdom the distinction between the field and the Knower of the field, and the annihilation of the Matrix of beings,—they reach the Supreme.

Ye, those who; *viduḥ*, know; *evam*, thus, in the manner described above; *jñāna-cakṣuṣā*, through the eye of wisdom—the *eye* is the realization in the form of the knowledge of the Self, which arises from following the instructions of the scriptures and teachers; through that eye of wisdom; *antaram*, the distinction, the particular mutual distinction; *kṣetra-kṣetrajñayoḥ*, between the field and the Knower of the field as they have been explained; and *bhūta-prakṛti-mokṣam*, the annihilation of the Matrix of beings—the Matrix of beings is that which is described as ignorance and is called the Unmanifest; (those who know) the annihilation (*mokṣaṇam*) of that Matrix of beings; *te*, they; *yānti*, reach, go to; *param*, the Supreme, to Brahman, the Reality which is the supreme Goal. The idea is that they do not take up a body again.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[80] In the first six and the following six chapters the meaning of the words 'thou' and 'That', respectively, have been spoken of. The last

six chapters are concerned with determining the meaning of the sentence (‘Thou art That’) as a whole.

[81] See footnote on p.20, and p.141.

[82] If it be held that objects of experience may be superimposed on one another, but they cannot be superimposed on the experiencer, the answer is that this cannot be a universal proposition. For decrepitude and death, which are matters of experience, are superimposed on the Self, the experiencer.

[83] *Etc*: false perception and doubt.

[84] It is known through the process of agreement and difference that false perception etc. arise from some defects, and they are not the qualities of the Self.

[85] *Natural relationship*—Self-identification with the body through ignorance.

[86] In the Bṛ. (1.5.17) we read, ‘Now therefore the entrusting: When a man thinks he will die, he says to his son, “You are Brahman, you are the sacrifice, and you are the world,”’ etc. It has been enjoined here in this manner that the son should accept as his own all the duties thus entrusted to him by the father. Similarly, it is understood that when a son in unable to perform his own duties, the father has to accept them. So also in the case of brothers and others.

Thus, in the case of the enlightened person also, though there is a comprehension of his own distinction from effect and cause, still, owing to his earlier relationship with ignorance, body, etc., there is no contradiction in his understanding that the injunctions and prohibitions are meant for him.

[87] In B.S. (3.4.26–7) it is said that the merit earned by the performance of scriptural duties helps to generate knowledge of Brahman. Therefore these duties are not meant for the enlightened. (By following what is enjoined, and avoiding what is prohibited, one’s mind becomes purified, and *then only* one understands he is different from cause and effect—agentship and enjoyership.—Tr.)

[88] Possessed of aristocracy, etc.

[89] Body, wife, etc.

[90] 'When you are knowing your own ignorance.'

[91] 'After having perceived ignorance as an object of your knowledge, how can you who continue to be the knower cognize yourself as the knower of that ignorance? For this would lead to the contradiction of the same person becoming the subject and the object of cognition.'

[92] Since the knower cannot be known, therefore his relation with ignorance also cannot be known by himself or by anybody else.

[93] The different branches of Vedic texts.

[94] The undifferentiated (*avyakta*), *mahat*, egoism and the five uncompounded subtle elements.

[95] Birth etc. are perceivable events, and as such are not miseries in themselves.

[96] See fn. on p. 193.—Tr.

[97] 'That which has no (*a*) beginning (*ādi*) is *anādi*.' *Matup* is used to denote possession. Since the idea of possession is already implied in *anādi*, therefore *matup*, if added after it, becomes redundant.

[98] The Commentator accepts *anādimat* as a *nañ-tatpuruṣa* compound. If, however, the *Bahuvrīhi* is insisted on, then the *mat* after *anādi* should be taken as completing the number of syllables needed for versification. So, *mat* need not be compounded with *param*.

[99] Cf. '*Prācīnavamśam karoti*, he constructs (that is shall construct) (the sacrificial shed) with its supporting beam turned east-ward' (Tai. Saṁ.; also see *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Monier Williams). —Tr.

[100] The Upaniṣadic text is not to be rejected on the ground that it is paradoxical, for it is meant to present Brahman as identical with one's own inmost Self.

[101] See note on p. 46. Here, the passage, '…whether there exists…,' etc. is to be interpreted as an *arthavāda* emphasizing the need of raising a shed, irrespective of any other consideration.—Tr.

[102] This is an *arthavāda* (see note on p. 411), which is not to be taken literally but interpreted in accordance with the context.

[103] A variant reading is *dhiṣṭhitam*.—Tr.

[104] Cf. 15.16-18.

[105] *Prakṛti* is sometimes translated as matter, and *puruṣa* as spirit.—Tr.

[106] *Tatpuruṣa*: Name of a class of compounds in which the first member determines the sense of the other members, or in which the last member is defined or qualified by the first, without losing its original independence.—V.S.A.

[107] *Uncaused*, that is not caused by Nature and soul, but by God independently of those two aspects.

[108] If God were Himself the sole cause of mundane existence, independently of His two aspects, then it would be endless because there would be nothing to prevent liberated souls from being put under bondage again.

[109] Five sense organs, five motor organs, mind, intellect and ego.

[110] The eleven organs (five sensory, five motor, and mind) and the five objects (sound etc.).

[111] *Mahat*, egoism, and the five subtle elements.

[112] *Bhuṅkte*, lit. enjoys, here means 'experiences'.—Tr.

[113] See Śaṅkarācārya's Comm. on this.—Tr.

[114] Verse 12 deals with the refutation of alien elements, and verse 13 with the superimposition of qualities belonging to others.

[115] viz. enjoyment, or Liberation.—Tr.

[116] Aṣṭ reads *ataḥ* in place of *antaḥ*. So the translation of the sentence will be: Therefore He is also referred to as the transcendental Self in the Upaniṣads.—Tr.

[117] Since all actions arise from ignorance, they are on the same level so far so they are opposed to Knowledge; that is, there can be no such distinction among actions as ‘those which have started yielding results’ and ‘those that have not’.

[118] See 18.66: ‘I shall free you from all sins,’ etc.—Tr.

[119] *Kleśas*, evils—see note under 8.19—Tr.

[120] The internal organ bearing the reflection of Consciousness.

[121] By Sāṅkhya is meant that knowledge which arises from the foregoing reflection. This knowledge is itself called Yoga (concentration of mind) inasmuch as it is similar to Yoga in leading to the realization of the Self.

[122] The best among the yogīs are competent for meditation (*dhyāna*); the mediocre for reflection (Sāṅkhya); and the lowest for Karma-yoga.

[123] See note 3 on p.48.—Tr.

[124] Free from all modifications that things are subject to.

[125]i.e. either through superimposition or through non-superimposition.

[126] Not by the Pradhāna of the Sāṅkhyas, known otherwise as Prakṛti.

[127] *Smara*, memory; see Śaṅkarācārya’s Comm. on Ch. 7.13.1.—Tr.

[128] Also translated as tainted.—Tr.

[129] If the supreme One also acts like us, then He is no God.

[130] The singular number is used to denote a class, that is all bodies. See Ś.—Tr.

CHAPTER 14

THE CLASSIFICATION OF

THE THREE GUNAS

It has been said that whatever comes into being does so through the association between the field and the Knower of the field. This Chapter commencing with 'I shall speak again of the supreme…,' etc. is begun to show how that happens, or to show that the field and the Knower of the field become the cause of the world while remaining subservient to God, but not independently as is held by the Sāṅkhya school.

It has been stated that 'being seated in Nature' and the association with the qualities are the causes of mundane existence. (This Chapter is begun) also to show with which quality and how the association occurs, and which are the qualities and how they bind; and also because it has to be stated how freedom from the qualities comes about, and what the characteristics of a liberated person are.

The Blessed Lord said:

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम्।
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः॥१॥

1. I shall speak again of the supreme Knowledge, the best of all knowledges, by realizing which all the contemplatives reached the highest Perfection from here.

The word *param* should be connected with the remote word *jñānam*.

Pravakṣyāmi, I shall speak; *bhūyaḥ*, again—even though spoken of more than once in all the preceding chapters; of the *param*, supreme—it is supreme because it is concerned with the supreme Reality;—which is that?—*jñānam*, Knowledge; *uttamam*, the best—since it has the best result; *jñānānām*, of all knowledges—. 'Of all knowledges' does not mean 'of humility' etc. (13.7–11). What then? It means 'among knowledges of all knowable things like sacrifice etc.' They do not lead to Liberation, but this

(Knowledge) leads to Liberation. Hence the Lord praises it with the words ‘supreme’ and ‘best’, so as to arouse interest in the intellect of the listener.

Yat jñātvā, by realizing which, by attaining which Knowledge; *sarve*, all; *munayaḥ*, the contemplatives, the monks (131) *gatāḥ*, reached, attained; *itaḥ*, from here—when this bondage of the body had ceased; *parām*, the highest; *siddhim*, Perfection, called Liberation.

And the Lord shows the infallibility of this Perfection:

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च॥२॥

2. Those who attain identity with Me by resorting to this Knowledge are not born even during creation, nor do they suffer pain during dissolution.

Āgatāh, those who attain; *mama sādharmyam*, identity with Me the supreme God, unity with My real nature—*sādharmyam*, however, does not mean similarity of attributes, for, in the scripture *Gītā*, distinction between the Knower of the field and God is not admitted; and this statement of the result is by way of eulogy—; *upāśritya*, by resorting to that is by following; *idam*, this; *jñānam*, Knowledge as described, that is, by following the means to Knowledge; *na*, are not; *upajāyante*, born, produced; *api*, even; *sarge*, during creation; nor do they *vyathanti*, suffer pain, that is they do not perish; *pralaye*, during dissolution, when even Brahmā perishes.

The Lord says that association of this kind between the field and the Knower of the field is the origin of all beings:

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं दधाम्यहम्।
सम्भवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत॥३॥

3. My womb is the great-sustainer. In that I place the seed. From that, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, occurs the birth of all things.

Mama, My own Māyā, that is Prakṛti consisting of the three qualities, which belongs to Me; is the *yoniḥ*, womb (132) for all the creatures. Since it (Prakṛti) is great (*mahat*) as compared with all its effects, and it is the sustainer (*brahma*) (133) of all its own transformations, therefore the womb itself is qualified as *mahat brahma*. *Tasmin*, in that, in the womb which is

the great-sustainer; *aham*, I, God, possessed of the power in the form of the two aspects, viz. the field and the Knower of the field; *dadhāmi*, place, deposit; *garbham*, the seed—the seed of the birth of Hiraṇyagarbha, the seed which is the cause of the birth of all things—; that is, I bring the field into association with the Knower of the field who conforms to the nature of the limiting adjuncts, viz. ignorance, desire and activity.

Tataḥ, from that, from that deposition of the seed; O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *bhavati*, occurs; *sambhavaḥ*, the birth, origination; *sarva-bhūtānām*, of all things, following the birth of Hiraṇyagarbha.

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तय: सम्भवन्ति या:।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रद: पिता॥४॥

4. O son of Kuntī, whatever forms are born from all the wombs, of them the great-sustainer is the womb; I am the father who deposits the seed.

O son of Kuntī, *yāḥ*, whatever; *mūrtayaḥ*, forms—that have their parts and limbs integrated, which is characteristic of the formation of bodies; *sambhavanti*, are born; *sarva-yoniṣu*, from all wombs—from the wombs of gods, manes, humans, cattle, beasts, etc.; *tāsām*, of them, of those forms; *mahat brahma*, the great-sustainer, which exists as all the (various) forms; is the *yoniḥ*, womb, source. *Aham*, I, God; am the *pitā*, father; *bīja-pradaḥ*, who deposits the seed, the agent of impregnation.

(Now) is being stated which are the qualities and how they bind:

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणा: प्रकृतिसम्भवा:।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम्॥५॥

5. O mighty-armed one, the qualities, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, born of Nature, being the immutable embodied being to the body.

O mighty-armed one—who are possessed of hands which are great and mighty, and extend up to the knees, *guṇāh*, the qualities are named *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. And they, *prakṛti-sambhavāḥ*, born of Nature, born of Māyā which belongs to God; *nibadhnanti*, bind, as it were; the *avyayam*, immutable—the immutability has been spoken of in the verse, ‘Being

without beginning...,' etc. (13.31); *dehinam*, embodied being; *dehe*, to the body.

The word *guṇa* is a technical term, and is not a quality like colour etc. which inhere in some substance. Nor is it meant here that quality and substance are different. Therefore they are ever dependent on the Knower of the field, just as qualities are dependent (on some substance). Being of the nature of ignorance, they bind the Knower of the field, as it were. They come into being, making That (Knower) their sustainer. In this sense it is said that they bind.

Objection: Was it not said that the embodied one does not become defiled (see 13.31–2)? So, why is it contrarily said here that 'they bind'?

Reply: We have rebutted this objection by using the word *iva* (as it were) in 'they bind, as it were'.

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम्।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ॥६॥

6. Among them, *sattva*, being pure, (134) is an illuminator and is harmless. O sinless one, it binds through attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge.

Tatra, among them, among *sattva* etc.;—the characteristics of *sattva* itself is being stated first—*sattva*, *nirmalatvāt*, being pure like a crystal stone; is *prakāśakam*, an illuminator; and *anāmayam*, harmless. *Anagha*, O sinless one; *badhnāti*, it binds. How? *Sukhasaṅgena*, through attachment to happiness. Bringing about the association of happiness, which is the object, with the Self, which is the subject, in the form of the idea, 'I am happy', is certainly an unreal contact with happiness. This as such is nescience, for the quality of an object cannot belong to a subject. And it has been said by the Lord that all the qualities, from 'desire' to 'fortitude' (see 13.6), are, indeed, of the field, which is the object. Therefore, it is certainly through nescience, which is an attribute (135) of the Self and has the characteristics of non-discrimination between object and subject, that *sattva* apparently brings about the association with happiness, which is not the Self. It makes (the Self) attached, as it were; (136) makes one not possessed of happiness as though possessed of it!

Similarly, it binds also *Jñāna-saṅgena*, through attachment to knowledge. [137] Because of its concomitance with happiness, knowledge here is an attribute of the internal organ, the field, but not of the Self. Were it an attribute [138] of the Self, there could be no *contact* (between it and the Self), and 'bondage' would become illogical. Association with knowledge etc. should be understood in the same sense as with happiness.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥७॥

7. Know *rajas* to be of the nature of passion, born of hankering and attachment. O son of Kuntī, that binds the embodied one through attachment to action.

Viddhi, know; *rajas* to be *rāgātmakam*, of the nature of passion (—*rāga* is derived in the sense of that which colours—), having the property of colouring, like the ochre pigment etc.; *tṛṣṇā-āsaṅga-samud-bhavam*, born of hankering and attachment—hankering is the longing for things not acquired; attachment is the clinging—of the nature of fondness—of the mind to things in possession. O son of Kuntī, *tat*, that, that *rajas*; *nibadhnāti*, binds; *dehinam*, the embodied one; *karma-saṅgena*, through attachment to actions. Deep involvement in actions related to seen or unseen objects is *karmasaṅgah*. *Rajas* binds through that.

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥८॥

8. On the other hand, know *tamas*, which deludes all embodied beings, to be born of ignorance. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, that binds through inadvertence, laziness and sleep.

Viddhi, know; *tamas*, the third quality; *mohanam*, which deludes, which is a cause of indiscrimination; *sarva-dehinām*, of all embodied beings; to be *ajñānajam*, born of ignorance. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *tat*, that *tamas*; *nibadhnāti*, binds; *pramāda-ālasya-nidrābhiḥ*, through inadvertence, laziness and sleep.

The activities of the qualities are again being briefly stated:

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत॥९॥

9. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *sattva* attaches one to happiness, *rajas* to action, while *tamas*, covering up knowledge, leads to inadvertence also.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *sattva*, *sañjayati*, attaches one; *sukhe*, to happiness; *rajas* (—*attaches* is understood—) *karmaṇi*, to action; *tu*, while; *tamas*, *āvṛtya*, covering up, veiling; *jñānam*, knowledge, the discrimination produced by *sattva*; *sañjayati*, leads *pramāde*, to inadvertence; *uta*, also. *Pramāda* means non-performance of a duty on hand.

When do the qualities produce the effects stated above? That is being answered:

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा॥१०॥

10. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *sattva* increases by subduing *rajas* and *tamas*, *rajas* by overpowering *sattva* and *tamas*, and *tamas* by dominating over *sattva* and *rajas*.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *sattva bhavati*, increases, comes into being; *abhibhūya*, by subduing both *rajas* and *tamas*. When *sattva* increases, then, coming to its own, it produces its own effects—knowledge, happiness, etc. Similarly, when the quality of *rajas* increases by overpowering both *sattva* and *tamas*, then it produces its own effects—activity and hankering. When the quality called *tamas* increases by similarly dominating over *sattva* and *rajas*, it then produces its own effects —obscuring of knowledge, etc.

When any quality preponderates, then what is its indication? This is being answered:

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत॥११॥

11. When the illumination that is knowledge radiates in this body through all the doors (of the senses), then one should know that *sattva* has

increased greatly.

Yadā, when; *prakāśaḥ*, the illumination—*prakāśa*, illumination, is a function of the internal organ, intelligence; that itself is *jñānam*, knowledge; when this illumination called knowledge *upajāyate*, radiates; *asmin*, in this; *dehe*, body; *sarva-dvāreṣu*, through all the doors—all the sense organs, (viz.) ear etc., are the Self's doors of perception; through all those doors; *tadā*, then; through this indication, viz. the illumination that is knowledge, *vidyāt*, one should know; *iti*, that; *sattva* has *vivṛddham*, increased; *uta*, greatly (139).

This is the characteristics of rajas when it has become prominent:

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ॥१२॥

12. O best of the Bharata dynasty, when *rajas* becomes predominant, these come into being: avarice, movement, undertaking of actions, unrest and hankering.

O best of the Bharata dynasty, when the quality of *rajas vivṛddhe*, becomes predominant; *etāni*, these indications; *jāyante*, come into being; *lobhaḥ*, avarice, the desire to appropriate other's possessions; *pravṛttiḥ*, movement in general; *ārambhaḥ*, undertaking;—of what?—*karmaṇām*, of actions; *aśamaḥ*, unrest, lack of tranquillity—(that is) manifestation of joy, attachment, etc.; and *spṛhā*, hankering, desire in general for all things.

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन॥१३॥

13. O descendant of the Kuru dynasty, when tamas predominates these surely (140) come into being: non-discrimination and inactivity, inadvertence and delusion.

Kuru-nandana, O descendant of the Kuru dynasty; when the quality of *tamas vivṛddhe*, predominates; *etāni*, these indications; *eva*, surely; *jāyante*, come into being; extreme *aprakāśaḥ*, non-discrimination; and *apravṛttiḥ*, inactivity; its (141) effects, *pramādaḥ*, inadvertence; and *mohaḥ*, delusion, that is stupidity, which is a form of non-discrimination.

Whatever result is achieved even after death, that is also owing to attachment and desire; everything is certainly caused by the qualities. By way of showing this the Lord says:

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत्।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते॥१४॥

14. When an embodied one undergoes death while *sattva* is exclusively predominant, then he attains the taintless worlds of those who know the highest (entities).

Yadā, when; *deha-bhṛt*, an embodied one, the soul; *yāti*, undergoes; *pralayam*, death; *sattve pravṛddhe*, while *sattva* is predominant; *tu*, exclusively; (142) *tadā*, then; *pratipadyate*, he attains, that is gains; the *amalān*, taintless, stainless; *lokān*, worlds; (143) *uttamavidām*, of those who know the highest, that is of those who have known the principles—*mahat* and the rest.

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते॥१५॥

15. When one dies while *rajas* predominates, he is born among people attached to activity. Similarly, when one dies while *tamas* predominates, he takes birth among the stupid species.

Pralayam gatvā, when one dies; *rajasi*, while the quality of *rajas* predominates; *jāyate*, he is born; *karma-saṅgiṣu*, among people attached to activity, among human beings having attachment to work. *Tathā*, similarly, in that very way; *pralīnaḥ*, when one dies; *tamasi*, while *tamas* predominates; *jāyate*, he takes birth; *mūḍha-yoniṣu*, among the stupid species, such as animals etc.

A summary of the idea of the preceding (three) verses is being stated:

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम्।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम्॥१६॥

16. They say that the result of good work is pure and is born of *sattva*. But the result of *rajas* is sorrow; the result of *tamas* is ignorance.

Āhuḥ, they, the wise persons, say; that *phalam*, the result; *sukṛtasya*, of good; *karmaṇaḥ*, work, that is acts having the *sattva* quality; is verily *nirmalam*, pure; and is *sāttvikam*, born of *sattva*. *Tu*, but; *phalam*, the result; *rajasaḥ*, of *rajas*, that is of acts that have the quality of *rajas*—for the topic relates to actions; is *duḥkham*, sorrow. In accordance with its cause, the result too is indeed sorrow, a product of *rajas*. So also *ajñānam*, ignorance; is, as before, (the result) *tamasaḥ*, of *tamas*, of unrighteous acts that have the quality of *tamas*.

What else results from the qualities?

सत्त्वात्सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च॥१७॥

17. From *sattva* is born knowledge, (144) and from *rajas*, verily, avarice. From *tamas* are born inadvertence and delusion as also ignorance, to be sure.

Sattvāt, from *sattva*, when it predominates; *sañjāyate*, is born; *jñānam*, knowledge; and *rajasaḥ*, from *rajas*; is verily born *lobhaḥ*, avarice. *Tamasaḥ*, from *tamas*; *bhavataḥ*, are born; both *pramāda-mohau*, inadvertence and delusion; as also *ajñānam*, ignorance (145); *eva ca*, to be sure.

Further,

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः॥१८॥

18. People who conform to *sattva* go higher up; those who conform to *rajas* stay in the middle; those who conform to *tamas*, who conform to the actions of the lowest quality, go down.

Sattvasthāḥ, people who conform to *sattva*, to the actions of *sattva* quality; *gacchanti*, go, are born; *ūrdhvam*, higher up, in the worlds of gods and others. *Rājasāḥ*, those who conform to *rajas*; (146) *tiṣṭhanti*, stay, are born; *madhye*, in the middle, among human beings. *Tāmasāḥ*, those who conform to *tamas*, *jaghanya-guṇavṛttasthāḥ (147)*, who conform to actions of the lowest quality of *tamas*, those who are attached to its actions—sleep,

laziness, etc.—, the foolish; *gacchanti*, go; *adhaḥ*, down, (that is) they are born among cattle etc.

The association, owing to the false ignorance in the form of 'being seated in Nature', that an individual soul has with the *guṇas*—in the form of happiness, sorrow and delusion, and which are matters of experience in such ways as, 'I am happy,' 'I am sorrowful,' 'I am ignorant,'—that (association) is the cause of the individual soul's mundane existence characterized by coming to have births in good and bad species. This was stated briefly in the earlier chapter. Elaborating that here in the text beginning with, 'the qualities, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, born of Nature' (5), the Lord has said that the nature of the qualities, the conduct conforming to the qualities, and the power to bind that the qualities have through actions conforming to them, and also the course of a person under the bondage of behaviour conforming to the qualities,—all this is false knowledge; it has ignorance as its root and is the cause of bondage.

Now, it is necessary to state that Liberation follows from right knowledge. Hence the Lord says:

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति॥१९॥

19. When the witness sees none other than the qualities as the agent, and knows that which is superior (148) to the qualities, he attains My nature.

Yadā, when; *draṣṭā*, the witness, after becoming illumined; *anupaśyati*, sees; *na anyam*, none other; *guṇebhyaḥ*, than the qualities that have transformed into the shape of body, organs and objects; *kartāram*, as the agent—(that is) he sees thus that the qualities themselves, in all their modes, are the agents of all activities; *ca*, and; *vetti*, knows; that which, standing as the witness of the activities of the qualities, is *param*, superior; *guṇebhyaḥ*, to the qualities; *saḥ*, he, the witness; *adhigacchati*, attains; *madbhāvam*, My nature.

How does he attain? That is being stated:

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान्।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते॥२०॥

20. Having transcended these three qualities which are the origin of the body, the embodied one, becoming free from birth, death, old age and sorrows, experiences Immortality.

Atītya, having transcended, having gone beyond—even while living; *etān*, these; *trīn*, three; *guṇān*, qualities as have been described, which constitute the limiting adjunct Māyā; and *dehasamudbhavān*, which are the origin of the body, which are the seed of the birth of the body; *dehī*, the embodied one, the enlightened one; *vimuktaḥ*, becoming free—even in this life; *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhaih*, from birth, death, old age and sorrow; *aśnute*, experiences; (149) *amṛtam*, Immortality. In this way he attains My nature. This is the idea.

Getting a clue to a question from the statement that one experiences Immortality, even in this life, by going beyond the qualities—

Arjuna said :

कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते॥२१॥

21. O Lord, by what signs is one (known) who has gone beyond these three qualities? What is his behaviour, and how does he transcend these three qualities?

Prabho, O Lord; *kaiḥ*, by what; *liṅgaiḥ*, signs; *bhavati*, is one (known); *atītaḥ*, who has gone beyond; *etān*, these; *trīn*, three; *guṇān*, qualities that have been explained? *Kim*, what; is his *ācāraḥ*, behaviour; *ca*, and; *katham*, how, in what way; *ativartate*, does he transcend; (150) *etān*, these; *trīn*, three; *guṇān*, qualities?

In this verse the signs of one who has gone beyond the qualities, and the means of transcending them have been asked by Arjuna. By way of replying to the two questions, the Lord said: 'As for the question, "With what signs does one who has gone beyond the qualities become endowed with?", listen to them':

The Blessed Lord said:

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव।

न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति॥२२॥

22. O son of Pāṇḍu, he neither dislikes illumination (knowledge), activity and delusion when they appear, nor does he long for them when they disappear.

Na dveṣṭi, he neither dislikes these; *prakāśam*, illumination (knowledge), an effect of *sattva*; *pravṛttim*, activity, an effect of *rajas*; and *moham*, delusion, an effect of *tamas*; *sampravṛttāni*, when they appear, when they fully emerge in the form of objects (of experience)—.

'In me has arisen a perception which is a result of *tamas*; thereby I have become deluded'; so also, 'In me has risen (the inclination to) action which is painful and is born of *rajas*. By that *rajas* I have been actuated, carried away from my own nature. This is a matter of sorrow to me that there has been a deviation from my own nature'; similarly, 'The quality of *sattva*, in the form of illumination that is knowledge, binds me by attributing discrimination to me and making me attached to happiness'—(by thinking) in these ways one dislikes them because of his being not fully enlightened. The person who has transcended the qualities does not dislike them in this manner.

Unlike a person having *sattva* etc., who longs for the effects of *sattva* etc. which withdraw themselves after becoming manifest to him, the person who has gone beyond the qualities *na kāṅkṣati*, does not long for them in that way; *nivṛttāni*, when they disappear. This is the idea.

This is not an indication that can be perceived by others. What then? Since this characteristic is perceivable to oneself, it is merely subjective. For dislike or longing, which is a subjective experience of a person, is not seen by another.

Now, then, the Lord gives the reply to the question, 'What is the behaviour of one who has gone beyond the qualities?':

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते॥२३॥

23. He who, sitting like one indifferent, is not distracted by the three qualities; he who, thinking that the qualities alone act, remains firm and

surely does not move;

He, the Self-realized monk, *yaḥ*, who; *āsīnaḥ*, sitting; *udāsīnavat*, like one indifferent—as an indifferent man sides with nobody, similarly, this one, set on the path leading to the transcendence of the qualities; *na*, is not; *vicālyate*, distracted from the state of Knowledge arising out of discrimination; *guṇaiḥ*, by the qualities. This point is being clarified as such: *Yaḥ*, he who; thinking *iti*, that; *guṇāḥ*, the qualities, which have transformed into body, organs and objects; *vartante*, act on one another; *avatiṣṭhati*, remains firm—*avatiṣṭhati* (instead of *avatiṣṭhate*) is used in the Parasmaipada to avoid a break in the metre, or there is a different reading, '*yaḥ anutiṣṭhati*, who acts'—; (151) and *na*, does not; *iṅgate*, move; that is, becomes *eva*, surely settled in his own nature—.

समदु:खसुख: स्वस्थ: समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चन: ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुति: ॥२४॥

24. He to whom sorrow and happiness are alike, who is established in his own Self, to whom a lump of earth, iron and gold are the same, to whom the agreeable and the disagreeable are the same, who is wise, to whom censure and his own praise are the same;

Moreover, *sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ*, he to whom sorrow and happiness are alike; *svasthaḥ*, who is established in his own Self, tranquil; *sama-loṣṭa-aśma-kāñcanaḥ*, to whom a lump of earth, iron and gold are the same; *tulya-priya-apriyaḥ*, to whom the agreeable and the disagreeable are the same; *dhīraḥ*, who is wise; *tulya-ṇindā-ātma-saṁstutiḥ*, to whom, to which monk, censure and his own praise are the same—.

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयो: ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीत: स उच्यते॥२५॥

25. He who is the same under honour and dishonour, who is equally disposed both towards the side of the friend and of the foe, who has renounced all enterprise,—he is said to have gone beyond the qualities.

Further, *tulyaḥ*, he who is the same, unperturbed; *māna-apamānayoḥ*, under honour and dishonour; *tulyaḥ*, who is equally disposed; *mitra-ari-pakṣayoḥ*, both towards the side of the friend and of the foe—although

from their own standpoint some may be unattached, still, in others' view they may appear to be siding either with friends or foes; hence it is said, 'equally disposed both towards the side of the friend and of the foe'; *sarva-ārambha-parityāgī*, who has renounced all enterprise (—those which are undertaken are *ārambhāḥ*, actions intended for seen or unseen results—), that is who is apt to give up all undertakings, who has given up all actions other than those needed merely for the maintenance of the body; *saḥ*, he; *ucyate*, is said to have; *guṇātītaḥ*, gone beyond the qualities.

The disciplines leading to the state of transcendence of the qualities, which have been stated (in the verses) beginning from 'he who, sitting like one indifferent,' and ending with 'he is said to have gone beyond the qualities,' have to be practised by a monk, a seeker of Liberation, so long as they are to be achieved through effort. But when they become firmly ingrained, they become the indications, perceivable to himself, of a monk who has transcended the qualities.

Now the Lord gives the reply to the question, 'And how does he transcend the qualities?'

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते।
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥२६॥

26. And he who serves Me through the unswerving Yoga of Devotion, he, having gone beyond these qualities, qualifies for becoming Brahman.

And he—be he a monk or a man of action (rites and duties)—, *yaḥ*, who; *sevate*, serves; *mām*, Me, God, Nārāyaṇa residing in the hearts of all beings; *avyabhicāreṇa*, through the unswerving—that which never wavers—; *bhakti-yogena*, Yoga of Devotion—devotion (152) itself being the Yoga—; *saḥ*, he; *samatītya*, having transcended; *etān*, these; *guṇān*, qualities as described; *kalpate*, qualifies, that is becomes fit; *brahma-bhūyāya*,—*bhūyaḥ* is the same as *bhavanam*—, for becoming Brahman, for Liberation.

How this is so is being stated:

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च॥२७॥

27. For I am the Abode of Brahman—the indestructible and immutable, the eternal, the Dharma and absolute Bliss.

Hi, for; *aham*, I, the inmost Self; am the *pratiṣṭhā brahmanaḥ*, Abode —that in which something abides is *pratiṣṭhā*—of Brahman which is the supreme Self. Of Brahman of what kind? *Amṛtasya*, of that which is indestructible; *avyayasya*, of that which is immutable; and *śāśvatasya*, of that which is eternal; *dharmasya*, of that which is the Dharma, realizable through the Yoga of Jñāna which is called dharma (virtue); and *aikāntikasya sukhasya*, of that which is the absolute, unfailing Bliss by nature.

Since the inmost Self is the abode of the supreme Self—which by nature is immortal etc.—, therefore, through perfect Knowledge it (the former) is realized with certainty to be the supreme Self. This has been stated in, 'he qualifies for becoming Brahman'.

The purport is this: Indeed, that power of God through which Brahman sets out, comes forth, for the purpose of favouring the devotees, etc., that power which is Brahman Itself, am I. For, a power and the possessor of that power are non-different. Or, *brahman* means the conditioned Brahman, since It (too,) is referred to by that word.
'Of that Brahman, I Myself, the unconditioned Brahman—and none else—am the Abode.'

(The abode of Brahman) of what qualities? Of that which is immortal; of that which has the quality of deathlessness; of that which is immutable; so also, of that which is the eternal; which is the dharma having the characteristics of steadfastness in Knowledge; of that which is the absolute, unquestionably certain Bliss born of that (steadfastness);—
'I am the Abode' is understood.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[131] But not those who espoused monasticism as a formality in the fourth stage of life.

[132] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*kāraṇam*, cause' (—off all the creatures).—Tr.

[133] Prakṛti is *brahma* since it permeates all of its own products.—Ā.G.

It is *brahma* because it sustains all of its own products, or because it is an adjunct of Brahman.—Ś.

[134] *Nirmala*, pure—transparent, that is, capable of resisting any form of ignorance, and hence an illuminator, that is a revealer of Consciousness.

[135] In reality, though nescience has no connection with the Self, yet, since there is none other with which it can become associated and since it has no independence, therefore the Commentator imagines it as an attribute of the Self.

[136] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*asaṅgam saktam iva*, (makes) the Unattached attached, as it were'.—Tr.

[137] *Jñāna*, derived in the sense of 'that through which one knows,' means an instrument of knowledge, and not Consciousness.

(Ś.:) *Knowledge* arising from the study of the import of various scriptures; or, *jñānam*, means the scriptures, through which the supreme God is known and which leads to devotional practices, but not to steadfastness in (the absolute) Brahman.

[138] If knowledge were a natural attribute of the Self, then there can be no question of the latter again becoming bound through association with the former.

[139] See Ā.G.—Tr.

[140] That is without exception.—M.S.

[141] That is of non-discrimination.

[142] *Tu* is used to exclude *rajas* and *tamas*.—Ś.

[143] The worlds of Brahmā, etc., which are free from the impurity of predominance either of *rajas* or *tamas*.

[144] Knowledge acquired through the sense-organs.

[145] Absence of discrimination.

[146] Those who are endowed with sense-knowledge and actions consequent on the preponderance of *rajas*.

[147] A variant reading is *vṛttisthāḥ*.—Tr.

[148] i.e. different from.

[149] Some translate this as ‘attains’.—Tr.

[150] Aṣṭ. adds here, ‘*atītya vartate*, (in what way) does he exist after transcending (the three qualities)?’—Tr.

[151] His apparent activity consists in the mere continuance of actions which have been subjectively sublated through enlightenment.

[152] Bhakti (devotion), supreme Love, through which one becomes united (with God) is yoga.

CHAPTER 15

THE SUPREME PERSON

‘Since the result of actions of those who perform their rites and duties and the result of those who tread the path of Knowledge are at My disposal, therefore those who worship Me through the Yoga of Devotion, they, having transcended the qualities through the stages leading to Illumination, attain Liberation by My grace.’ It goes without saying that those who fully know the reality of the Self itself attain it (Liberation). Hence, though not asked by Arjuna, the Lord said, ‘With roots above,’ etc., with the intention of speaking about the reality of the Self.

Now then, for the sake of arousing dispassion He first describes the real nature of the world through the imagery of a tree; because of the competence for the knowledge of the nature of God is only his who has become detached from the world; not of any other. Hence, —

The Blessed Lord said:

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित्॥१॥

1. They say that the Peepul Tree, which has its roots upward and the branches downward, and of which the Vedas are the leaves, is imperishable. He who realizes it is knower of the Vedas.

Ūrdhva-mūlam, that which has its roots upwards:— Brahman, possessed of the unmanifest power in the form of Māyā, is referred to by the word ‘upward’ because of Its subtleness in point of time by virtue of Its being the Cause, and also because of Its eternality and vastness; and That is the root (*mūlam*) of this world. The Tree of the World which is such, is *ūrdhva-mūlam*. This accords with the Upaniṣadic text, ‘This has its roots above and branches below’ (Ka. 2.6.1). In the Purāṇa also we have:

> It sprouts from the Root in the form of the Unmanifest; it grows through the sturdiness of that very One. And it has abundance of intelligence as its trunk, and the apertures of the organs as the hollows.

> The great elements are its boughs [153]; so also, it has the objects of perception as its leaves. It has virtue and vice as its beautiful flowers, and happiness and sorrow are the fruits it bears.
>
> This eternal Tree presided over by Brahman is a means of livelihood to all creatures. And this verily is the resort of Brahman [154]; in it Brahman dwells for ever.
>
> Having felled and split this Tree with the great sword of Knowledge, and then attaining the bliss of the Self, one does not return from that (bliss).' (Cf. Mbh. Āś. 47.12-15.)

That Tree which has its roots upwards and is constituted by the enchantment of mundane existence, and *adhaḥ-śākham*, which has the branches downwards—*mahat*, [155] egoism, subtle elements, etc. are its branches (*śākhāḥ*), as it were, extending downwards (*adhaḥ*); so, it has its branches downwards—; that Tree with its branches downwards, which does not (*a*) last (*stha*) even for the morrow (*śvaḥ*), is *aśvatthaḥ* (lit. Peepul tree). *Ahuḥ*, they say; that the *aśvatthaḥ*, Peepul Tree, undergoing destruction every moment; is *avyayam*, imperishable, and constituted by the enchantments of mundane existence. Having been in existence from time without beginning, that Tree of the World is imperishable. It is, indeed, well known as the sustainer of the beginningless and ceaseless series of bodies etc. They call that the imperishable.

Of that very Tree of the World here is another qualification: *Yasya*, that Tree of the World of which; *chandāṁsi—chandas* being derived in the sense of covering (protecting)—, the Vedas in the form of Ṛk, Yajus and Sāma; are the *paṛṇāni*, leaves, as it were. As leaves serve as protectors of a tree, so the Vedas serve as the protectors of the world; for they reveal what are virtue and vice as also their causes and results.

Yaḥ, he who; *veda*, knows; *tam*, that—the Tree of the World along with its root, as has been explained; *saḥ*, he; is a *vedavit*, knower of the Vedas, that is versed in the meaning of the Vedas.

Since, apart from this Tree of the World along with its root, not even an iota of any other thing remains to be known, therefore he who knows the purport of the Vedas is omniscient. In this way the Lord eulogizes the knowledge of the Tree together with its root.

An imagery of the other parts of that very Tree of the World is being presented:

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखाः
गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः।
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि
कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके॥२॥

2. The branches of that (Tree), extending downwards and upwards, are strengthened by the qualities and have sense-objects as their shoots. And the roots, which are followed by actions, spread downwards in the human world (156).

Śākhāḥ, the branches, as it were; *tasya*, of that Tree; *prasṛtāḥ*, extending; *adhaḥ*, downwards, from the human beings to the immobile (trees etc.); *ca*, and; *ūrdhvam*, upwards, up to Brahmā—beginning from the Creator of the Cosmos to Dharma (Death), (157) which, 'in accordance with their work and in conformity with their knowledge' (Ka. 2.2.7), are the results of knowledge and actions; are *guṇa-pravṛddhāḥ*, strengthened, made stout, by the qualities *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which are their materials; and *viṣaya-pravālāḥ*, have the sense-objects as their shoots. The sense-objects (sound etc.) sprout, as it were, like new leaves from the branches (bodies etc.) which are the results of actions. Thereby the branches are said to have sense-objects as their shoots.

The supreme Root, the material cause of the Tree of the World, has been stated earlier. And now, the latent impressions of attraction, repulsion, etc. born of the results of action are the subsidiary roots, as it were, which grow later on and become the cause of involvement in righteousness and unrighteousness. And those *mūlāni*, roots; *karma-anubandhīni*, which are followed by actions; *anusantatāni*, spread, enter; *adhaḥ*, downwards, as compared with the world of gods; *manuṣya-loke*, into the world of human beings particularly—for it is well known that (only) here men have competence for rites and duties. They (these roots) are said to be *karma-anubandhīni* since actions (*karma*) that are characterized as righteous and unrighteous follow as their product (*anubandha*), (that is) succeed the rise of those (attraction, repulsion, etc.).

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते
नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा।
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल-
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा॥३॥

3. Its form is not perceived here in that way; nor its end, nor beginning, nor continuance. After felling this Peepul whose roots are well developed, with the strong sword of detachment—;

But, *asya*, its—of this Tree of the World which has been described; *rūpam*, form, as it has been presented; *na*, is not at all; *upalabhyate*, perceived; *iha*, here; *tathā*, in that way. For, being like a dream, water in a mirage, jugglery, an imaginary city seen in the sky, it is by nature destroyed no sooner than it is seen. Therefore, *na*, there exists neither; its *antaḥ*, end, limit, termination; so also, neither; its *ādiḥ* beginning. It is not comprehended by anyone that it comes into existence beginning from any definite point. Its *sampratiṣṭhā*, continuance, the middle state, too, is not perceived by anyone.

Chittvā, after felling, uprooting, together with its seeds; *enam*, this, above described; *aśvattham*, Peepul, the Tree of the World; *suvirūḍha-mūlam*, whose roots (*mūla*) are well (*su*) developed (*virūḍham*); *dṛḍhena*, with the strong—hardened by a resolute mind directed towards the supreme Self, and sharpened on the stone of repeated practice of discrimination; *asaṅga-śastreṇa*, sword of detachment—detachment means turning away from the desire for progeny, wealth and the worlds; with that sword of detachment—.

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं
यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः।
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी॥४॥

4. Thereafter, that State has to be sought for, going where they do not return again: I take refuge in that Primeval Person Himself, from whom has ensued the eternal Manifestation.

Tataḥ, thereafter; *tat*, that; *padam*, State of *Viṣṇu*; *parimārgitavyam*, has to be sought for, that is realized; *gatāḥ*, going, entering; *yasmin*, where, into which State; they *na*, do not; *nivartanti*, return; *bhūyaḥ*, again, for worldly life.

As to how It is to be sought for, the Lord says: *Prapadye*, I take refuge; *tam*, in that; *ādyam*, Primeval—existing from the beginning; *puruṣam*, Person, who has been mentioned by the word *State*; *eva*, Himself. The search has to be carried on thus, that is, by taking refuge in Him.

Who is that Person? That is being stated: *Yataḥ*, from whom, from which Person; *prasṛtā*, has ensued, like jugglery from a magician; *purāṇī*, the eternal; *pravṛttiḥ*, Manifestation, the magic Tree of the World.

What kind of persons reach that State? This is being answered:

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा
अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः।
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□: □□□□□:□□□□□□□-
गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत्॥५॥

5. The wise ones who are free from pride and non-discrimination, who have conquered the evil of association, [158] who are ever devoted to spirituality, completely free from desires, free from the dualities called happiness and sorrow, reach that undecaying State.

Amūḍhāḥ, the wise ones, who are devoid of delusion; who are *nirmāna-mohāḥ*, free from (*nir*) pride (*māna*) and non-discrimination (*moha*); *jita-saṅga-doṣāḥ*, who have conquered (*jita*) the evil (*doṣa*) of association (*saṅga*)—association itself being the evil; those who have conquered that; *adhyātma-nityāḥ*, who are ever devoted to spirituality, ever engaged in reflecting on the nature of the supreme Self; engrossed in that; [159] *vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ*, who are completely (*vi*) free from (*nivṛtta*) desires (*kāmāḥ*), whose desires have completely gone away without trace (*ni*), the men of self-control, the monks; *vimuktāḥ*, who are free from, have got rid of; *dvandvaiḥ*, the dualities—likes, dislikes, etc.; *sukha-duḥkha-sañjñaiḥ*, called happiness and sorrow; *gacchanti*, reach; *tat*, that; *avyayam*, undecaying; *padam*, State, as has been described above.

The very State is being elaborated again:

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम॥६॥

6. Neither the sun nor the moon nor fire illumines That. That is My supreme Abode, reaching which they do not return.

Na sūryaḥ, neither the sun—though possessed of the power of illumining everything; so also, *na śaśāṅkaḥ*, nor the moon; *na pāvakaḥ*, nor even fire; *bhāsayate*, illumines; *tat*, That [—this (word) refers to the remote word *dhāma* (Abode) at the end of the verse—], that Abode which is of the nature of light. That abode, the State of Viṣṇu, *gatvā*, reaching, attaining; *yat*, which; they *na*, do not; *nivartante*, return, and which the sun etc. do not illumine; *tat*, that; is *mama*, My, Viṣṇu's; *paramam*, supreme; *dhāma*, Abode, State.

Objection: It has been said, 'reaching which they do not return'. Is it not well known that all goings end, verily, in returning, and unions are followed by separations? How is it said that there is no return for those who come to that Abode?

Reply: As to that, listen to the reason:

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति॥७॥

7. It is verily a part of Mine which, becoming the eternal individual soul in the region of living beings, draws (to itself) the organs which have the mind as their sixth, and which abide in Nature.

It is *eva*, verily *aṁśaḥ*, a part, portion, limb, fragment—these are all synonymous; *mama*, of mine, of the supreme Self; (160) which, *jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*, becoming the eternal individual soul, well known as the enjoyer and agent; *jīva-loke*, in the region of living beings, (that is) in the world—.

As the sun (reflected) in water is a part of the (actual) sun, and goes to the sun itself and does not return when the water, the cause of the reflection, is removed, so also even this part becomes similarly united with that very Self; or, as space enclosed in a pot etc., delimited by such adjuncts as the

pot etc., being a part of Space does not return after being united with Space when the cause (of limitation), viz. pot etc., is destroyed. This being so, it has been rightly stated, 'by reaching which they do not return.'

Objection: How can the partless supreme Self have any limb, fragment or part? If it has limbs, then there arises the contingency of Its becoming destroyed through the dismemberment of the limbs!

Reply: This fault does not arise, since Its fragment, which is delimited by an adjunct arising out of ignorance, is imagined to be a part, as it were. And this idea has been fully explained in the chapter (13) dealing with the 'field'.

How that individual soul, imagined as a part of Mine, enters into the world and leaves the body are being stated: *Karṣati*, it draws to itself; *indriyāṇi*, the (sense-) organs—ear etc.; *manaḥ-ṣaṣṭhāni*, which have the mind as their sixth; and *prakṛti-sthāni*, which abide in Nature, which are located in their respective spheres such as the orifice of the ear etc.

When (does it draw the organs)?

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात्॥८॥

8. When the master leaves it and even when he assumes a body, he departs taking these, as wind (carries away) odours from their receptacles.

Yat, when; *īśvaraḥ*, the master of the aggregate of the body etc., the individual soul; *utkrāmati*, leaves the body, then he draws. Thus, the second quarter of the verse is treated first for the sake of consistency. (161)

Ca api, and even; *yat*, when; it *avāpnoti*, assumes a body other than the earlier one; then, *gṛhītvā*, taking; *etāni*, these, the organs with the mind as their sixth; *saṁyāti*, he leaves, goes away totally. (162) Like what? In reply the Lord says: *iva*, as; *vāyuḥ*, the wind (carries away); *gandhān*, odours; *āśayāt*, from their receptacles—flowers etc.

Which, again, are those (organs)?

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते॥९॥

9. This one enjoys the objects by presiding over the ear, eyes, skin and tongue as also the nose and the mind.

Seated in the body, it *upasevate*, enjoys; *viṣayān*, the objects—sound etc.; *adhiṣṭhāya*, by presiding over; *śrotram*, the ear; *cakṣuḥ*, eyes; *sparśanam*, skin, the organ of touch; *rasanam*, tongue; *eva ca*, as also; the *ghrāṇam*, nose; and *manaḥ*, the mind, the sixth—(presiding over) each one of them along with its (corresponding) organ.

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥१०॥

10. Persons who are diversely deluded do not see it even when it is leaving or residing (in this body), or experiencing, or in association with the qualities. Those with the eye of knowledge see.

Thus, the embodied soul, *utkrāmantam*, when it is leaving the body—the body that was assumed earlier; or *sthitam*, while residing in the (present) body; or *bhuñjānam*, experiencing sound etc.; or *guṇa-anvitam*, in association with, that is identified with, the qualities called happiness, sorrow and delusion—even when, under such conditions, this one comes very much within the range of cognition; *vimūḍhāḥ*, the persons who are diversely deluded as a result of their hearts being forcibly attracted by the enjoyments of seen and unseen objects; *na*, do not; *anu-paśyanti*, see. And the Lord regrets this saying, ‘Alas! How sorrowful this is!’

Those others, again, *jñāna-cakṣuṣaḥ*, who have the eye of knowledge, (163) who have the insight of understanding which has arisen from the valid means of knowledge, that is, those having a clear vision; *paśyanti*, see this one.

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥११॥

11. And the yogīs who are diligent see this one as existing in themselves. The non-discriminating ones who lack self-control do not see this one — though (they be) diligent.

And some, however, *yogīnaḥ*, the yogīs of concentrated minds; *yatantaḥ*, who are diligent; *paśyanti*, see; *evam*, this one, the Self under discussion; as *avasthitam*, existing; *ātmani*, in themselves, in their own intelligence. They realize, 'I am This.'

Acetasaḥ, the non-discriminating ones; *akṛta-ātmānaḥ*, who lack self-control, who have not purified themselves through austerity and control of the organs, who have not desisted from bad conduct, who are not tranquil and are proud by nature; *na*, do not; *paśyanti*, see; *enam*, this one; *api*, though; (they be) *yatantaḥ*, diligent—even though they be striving with the help of the valid means of knowledge such as the scriptures.

With a view to speaking of the all-pervasiveness of the State and the fact of Its being the substratum of all empirical dealings, the Lord speaks in brief through the following four verses of the divine manifestations of that State which the light of fire, sun, etc. do not illumine though they are the illuminators of everything; and reaching which the aspirants of Liberation do not return again towards mundane existence; and of which State the individual souls, owing to their conformity with the diversity of limiting adjuncts, are parts, just as spaces enclosed in pot etc. are 'parts' of Space:

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम्।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम्॥१२॥

12. That light in the sun which illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon, and that which is in fire,—know that light to be Mine.

Yat, that which is; *āditya-gatam*, in the sun, which abides in the sun;—what is that—the *tejaḥ*, light, brilliance, radiance; which *bhāsayate*, illumines, reveals; *akhilam*, the whole, entire; *jagat*, world; *yat*, that illuminating light which is; *candramasi*, in the moon; *ca*, and *yat*, which is; *agnau*, in fire, the carrier of oblations; *viddhi*, know; *tat*, that; *tejaḥ*, light; to be *māmakam*, Mine. That light belong to Me who am Viṣṇu.

Or: The light that is Consciousness, which is in the sun, which is in the moon, and which is in fire, know that light to be Mine. That light belongs to Me who am Viṣṇu.

Objection: Is it not that the light that is Consciousness exists equally in the moving and the non-moving? Such being the case, why is this particular mention, 'That light in the sun which...,' etc?

Reply: This defect does not arise, because, owing to the abundance of the *sattva* quality, there can be an abundance (164) (of Consciousness). Since in the sun etc. the *sattva* is very much in evidence, is greatly brilliant, therefore there is an abundance of the light (of Consciousness) in them alone. And so it (sun etc.) is specially mentioned. But it is not that it (Consciousness) is abundant only there. Indeed, as in the world, a face, though in the same position, is not reflected in wood, a wall, etc., but in a mirror etc. it is reflected according to the degree in which they are more and more transparent, so is it here.

Further,

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः॥१३॥

13. And entering the earth I sustain the beings through (My) power; and nourish all the plants by becoming Soma (165) which is of the nature of sap.

Ca, and; *āviśya*, entering; *gām*, the earth; *aham*, I; *dhārayāmi*, sustain; *bhūtani*, the beings, the world; *ojasā*, through (My) power, the power that belongs to God and is free from passion and attachment, (and) which has penetrated the earth to support it, and owing to which the heavy earth does not fall and does not crumble. There is a similar *mantra*:

'By which the heaven is made mighty, and the earth firm' (Tai. Saṁ. 4.1.8.5), and also,

'He supported the earth' (op.cit., 4.1.8.3), etc.

Hence, it has rightly been said, 'Entering the earth I sustain the moving and non-moving beings.'

Moreover, *puṣṇāmi*, I nourish, I make healthy and full of the sweet flavour of juices; *sarvāḥ*, all; *oṣadhiḥ*, the plants—paddy, barley, etc.; *bhūtvā*, by becoming; *somaḥ*, Soma; *rasātmakaḥ*, which is of the nature of sap. Soma consists of all the juices; it is the source of all juices. Indeed, it nourishes all plants by infusing its own juice into everything.

Besides,

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम्॥१४॥

14. Taking the form of Vaiśvānara and residing in the bodies of creatures, I, in association with Prāṇa and Apāna, digest the four kinds of food.

Bhūtvā, taking the form of; *vaiśvānaraḥ*, Vaiśvānara, the fire in the stomach, mentioned in such Upaniṣadic texts as, 'This fire that is within man and digests the food (that is eaten) is Vaiśvānara' (Bṛ. 5.9.1); becoming that Vaiśvānara, and *āśritaḥ*, residing in, entering; *deham*, the bodies; *prāṇinām*, of creatures, of living beings; *aham*, I Myself; *prāṇa-apāna-samāyuktaḥ*, in association (166) with Prāṇa and Apāna; (167) *pacāmi*, digest; the *caturvidham*, four kinds of; *annam*, food—those that are eaten by masticating, swallowing, sucking and licking.

The eater is the fire called Vaiśvānara, and the eaten is the food Soma. One who looks upon all that there is as being these two, fire and Soma, is not affected by the impurity of food.

Further,

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो
मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो
वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम्॥१५॥

15. And I am seated in the hearts of all. From Me are memory, knowledge and their loss. I alone am the object to be known through all the Vedas; I am also the originator of the Vedānta, and I Myself am the knower of the Vedas.

And *aham*, I, as the Self; *san-niviṣṭaḥ*, am seated; *hṛdi*, in the hearts, in the intellects; *sarvasya*, of all creatures. Therefore, with regard to all the creatures, *mattaḥ*, from Me, from the Self; are *Smṛtiḥ*, memory; *jñānam*, knowledge; and their *apohanam*, loss.

The knowledge and memory of these creatures who perform good deeds come from Me in accordance with the good deeds; similarly, the loss, deterioration, of memory and knowledge of those who perform evil deeds comes from Me in accordance with the evil deeds.

Aham eva, I alone, the supreme Self; am the *vedyaḥ*, object to be known; *sarvaiḥ*, through all; *vedaiḥ*, the Vedas. I am also the *vedānta-kṛt*, the originator of the Vedānta, that is, the source of the traditional school of the teachings of Vedānta; and *aham eva*, I Myself; am the *veda-vit*, knower of the Vedas, the knower of the teachings of the Vedas.

In the verses beginning with, 'That light in the sun which...' (12), etc. have been stated briefly the majesty of God, the Lord called Nārāyaṇa, which arise from special limiting adjuncts. Now then, the succeeding verses are begun with a view to determining the real nature of that very Lord as the Unconditioned and Absolute, by distinguishing Him from the limiting adjuncts, (viz.) the mutable and the immutable. In that connection, after dividing into three parts (168) all the teachings of the preceding and the immediately succeeding chapters, the Lord says:

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।
क्षर: सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥१६॥

16. There are these two persons in the world—the mutable and the immutable. The mutable consists of all things; the one existing as Māyā is called the immutable.

There are *imau*, these; *dvau*, two—grouped separately; *puruṣau*, persons, so called (169); *loke* in the world; the *kṣaraḥ*, mutable—one group consists of the perishable; the other person is the *akṣaraḥ*, immutable, opposite of the former, the power of God called Māyā, which is the seed of the origin of the person called the mutable. That which is the receptacle of the impressions of desires, actions, etc., of countless transmigrating creatures is called the immutable person.

Who are those persons? The Lord Himself gives the answer: *Kṣaraḥ*, the mutable; consists of *sarvāṇi*, all; *bhūtāni*, things, that is the totality of all mutable things. *Kūṭasthaḥ* is the one existing as Māyā: *Kūṭa* means a heap; *kūṭasthaḥ*, is that which exists like a heap. Or, *kūṭa* is *māyā*,

deception, falsehood, crookedness, which are synonymous; that which exists in the diverse forms of *māyā* etc. is the *kūṭasthaḥ*. It is *ucyate*, called; the *akṣaraḥ*, immutable, because, owing to the countless seeds of worldly existence, it does not perish.

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः॥१७॥

17. But different is the supreme Person who is spoken of as the transcendental Self, who, permeating the three worlds, upholds (them), and is the imperishable God.

Tu, but; *anyaḥ*, different, entirely contrary in characteristics from these; is the *uttamaḥ*, supreme, most excellent; *puruṣaḥ*, Person, who is different in characteristics from these—the mutable and the immutable—, untouched by the mutable and the immutable limiting adjuncts, and is by nature eternal, pure, conscious and free; *udāhṛtaḥ*, spoken of in the Upaniṣads; *iti*, as; the *paramātmā*, supreme Self; He is *paramaḥ*, supreme, as compared with the selves like body etc. created by ignorance, and is the *ātmā*, Self, the inmost Consciousness of all beings. Hence, He is the supreme Self. He Himself is being specially described: *yaḥ*, who, by dint of His own active power inhering in the energy that is Māyā; (170) *āviśya*, permeating; *loka-trayam*, the three worlds—called Bhūḥ (Earth), Bhuvaḥ, (Intermediate Space) and Svaḥ (Heaven); *bibharti*, upholds (them) by merely being present in His own nature. (And He) is the *avyayaḥ*, imperishable; *īśvaraḥ*, God, the Omniscient One called Nārāyaṇa, who is the Lord by nature.

This name—the supreme Person—of God as described is well known. Showing that the name is apt by virtue of its etymological significance, the Lord reveals Himself saying, ‘I am the unsurpassable God’:

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः॥१८॥

18. Since I am transcendental to the mutable and above even the immutable, hence I am well known in the world and in the Vedas as the supreme Person.

Yasmāt, since; *aham*, I; am *atītaḥ*, transcendental; *kṣaram*, to the mutable—I am beyond the Tree of Māyā, called the Peepul Tree, which this worldly existence is; and *uttamaḥ*, above, most excellent or the highest; as compared with *api*, even; the *akṣarāt*, immutable, which is the seed of the Tree of worldly existence; *ataḥ*, hence, by virtue of being the most excellent as compared with the mutable and the immutable; *aham*, I; am *prathitaḥ*, well known; *loke*, in the world; and *vede*, in the Vedas; as *puruṣottamaḥ*, the supreme Person. Devoted persons know Me thus, and poets also use this name 'Puruṣottama' in their poetry etc.; they extol Me with this name.

Thereafter, now is stated this result attained by one who knows the Self as described:

यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम्।
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत॥१९॥

19. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, he who, being free from delusion, knows Me the supreme Person thus, he is all-knowing and adores Me with his whole being.

Bhārata, O scion of the Bharata dynasty; *yaḥ*, he who; *asammūḍhaḥ*, being free from delusion; *jānāti*, knows; *mām*, Me, God, having the aforesaid qualifications; *puruṣottamam*, the supreme Person; *evam*, thus, in the way described, as 'I am this One'; *saḥ*, he; is *sarva-vit*, all-knowing—he knows everything through self-identification with all—, i.e. (he becomes) omniscient; and *bhajati*, adores; *mām*, Me, existing in all things; *sarva-bhāvena*, with his whole being, that is with his mind fixed on Me as the Self of all.

Now then, having stated in this chapter the knowledge of the real nature of the Lord, which has Liberation as its fruit, it is being eulogized:

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयाऽनघ।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत॥२०॥

20. O sinless one, this most secret scripture has thus been uttered by Me. Understanding this, one becomes wise and has his duties fulfilled, O scion of the Bharata dynasty.

This *guhyatamam*, most secret, that is most mystical;—what is that?—*śāstram*, scripture—. Although the *Gītā* as a whole is spoken of as the scripture, still this chapter itself is here referred to as such, and this for eulogy as is evident from the context. For, not only has the entire meaning of the scripture *Gītā* been stated here in brief, but the whole purport of the Vedas also has been comprehended here. And it has been said, 'He who realizes it is a knower of the Vedas' (1), 'I alone am the object to be known through all the Vedas' (15). (Thus, this most secret scripture) *iti uktam*, has thus been uttered; *mayā*, by Me; *anagha*, O sinless one.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *buddhvā*, understanding; *etat*, this, the scripture which has the purport as has been revealed; *syāt*, one becomes; *buddhimān*, wise; and *kṛta-kṛtyaḥ*, has his duties fulfilled; but not otherwise. The meaning is that whatever a Brāhmaṇa has to do as a consequence of his special birth (as a Brāhmaṇa), all that becomes accomplished when the reality of the Lord is known. The idea is that nobody's duties become fulfilled in any other way. And it has been said, 'O son of Pṛthā, all actions in their totality culminate in Knowledge' (4.33). There is also a saying from Manu:

> 'This, verily, is the fulfilment of a Brāhmaṇa in particular. For, by getting this, a twice-born has his duties fulfilled; not otherwise' (Ma. Sm. 12.93).

Since you have heard from Me this truth about the supreme Reality, therefore, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, you have achieved your Goal!

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[153] Ā.G. takes the word *viśākha* (boughs) in the sense of *stambha*, perhaps meaning the aerial roots.—Tr.

[154] Or, *etat brahma-vanam* means: This Tree has Brahman as its object of adoration, its support. For, the world has nothing but Brahman as its support.

[155] See under 7.4.—Tr.

[156] According to Ā.G. and M.S. *manuṣya-loke* means a body distinguished by Brāhminhood etc.

[157] According to Ā.G. 'human beings' stands for the world of human beings, and 'Brahmā' for the 'world of Brahmā' (Satva-loka). So Dharma may mean the 'world of Death' (Pitṛ-loka).—Tr.

[158] Hatred and love arising from association with foes and friends.

[159] Engrossed in hearing, reflecting and meditating on the Self.

[160] Here Aṣṭ. adds '*nārāyaṇasya*, of Nārāyaṇa'.—Tr.

[161] When the soul leaves the body, then it draws the organs (see previous verses) from that body. In this way, the second quarter of the present verse is treated first, because going to another body follows the leaving of the earlier one.—M.S.

[162] *Samyak*, *totally*—without returning in any way to the earlier body.—M.S.

[163] *Jñāna-cakṣuḥ* means the scriptures supported by reasoning, which are the means of knowledge.

[164] Aṣṭ. reads *āvistaratva* (amplitude) in place of *ādhikya*.—Tr.

[165] According to S. and most other translators, Soma means the moon.—Tr.

[166] That is kindled, inflamed, by Prāṇa and Apāna.

[167] *Prāṇa*—that vital force which goes upward and has its seat really in the heart (cf. Tai. Bṛ. 3.10.8.5), but is said to be located at the tip of the nose since its presence is directly felt there.

Apāna—that vital force which goes downward, below the navel, and has its seat in the organs of excretion.—Tr.

[168] The two limiting adjuncts—the mutable and the immutable—, and the supreme Self.

[169] Persons—so called only figuratively, since they are the limiting adjuncts of the supreme Person.

[170] *Caitanya*, consciousness, itself is the *bala* (energy); the *śakti* (active power) therein is Māyā. Through that He upholds.

CHAPTER 16

THE DIVINE AND THE

DEMONIACAL ATTRIBUTES

The divine, fiendish and demoniacal natures of creatures were referred to in the ninth chapter (12, 13). In order to present them elaborately, the chapter opening with 'Fearlessness, purity of the mind,' etc. is begun. Among them, the divine nature leads to Liberation from worldly existence, while the fiendish and demoniacal lead to bondage. Hence, the divine nature is being presented so that it may be accepted, and the other two rejected.

The Blessed Lord said:

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम्॥१॥

1. The Blessed Lord said—Fearlessness, purity of mind, persistence in knowledge and yoga, charity and control of the external organs, sacrifice, (scriptural) study, austerity and rectitude;

Abhayam, fearlessness; *sattva-saṁśuddhiḥ*, purity of the mind (*sattva*), mentally avoiding fraud, trickery, falsehood, etc. in dealings, that is, honest behaviour; *jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ*, persistence in knowledge and yoga—*jñāna* means knowledge of such subjects as the Self, learnt from scriptures and teachers; *yoga* means making those things that have been learnt matters of one's own personal experience through concentration by means of withdrawal of the organs etc.; persistence, steadfastness, in those two, knowledge and yoga;—this (171) is the principal divine characteristic which is *sāttvika* (born of the *sattva* quality). That nature which may occur in persons competent in their respective spheres, (172)—that is said to be their *sattvika* attribute.

Dānam, charity, distribution of food etc. according to one's ability; and *damaḥ*, control of the external organs—the control of the internal organ, *śāntiḥ*, will be referred to later; *yajñaḥ*, sacrifices—Agnihotra etc. sanctioned by the Vedas, and sacrifices in honour of gods and others (173)

sanctioned by the Smṛtis: *svādhyāyaḥ*, study of the Ṛg-veda etc. for unseen results; *tapaḥ*, austerity, those concerning the body, etc., which will be stated (17.14–16); *ārjavam*, rectitude, straightforwardness at all times—.

Further,

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम्।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम्॥२॥

2. Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, control of the internal organ, absence of vilification, kindness to creatures, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, freedom from restlessness;

Ahiṁsa, non-injury, abstaining from giving pain to creatures; *satyam*, truthfulness, speaking of things as they are, without unpleasantness and prevarication; *akrodhaḥ*, absence of anger, control of anger that might result when offended or assaulted by others; *tyāgaḥ*, renunciation, monasticism—for, charity has been mentioned earlier; *śāntiḥ*, control of the internal organ; *apaiśunam*, absence of vilification—*paiśunam* means backbiting; its absence is *apaiśunam*; *dayā*, kindness; *bhūteṣu*, to creatures in distress; *aloluptvam*, non-convetousness, absence of excitement of the organs in the presence of objects; *mārdavam*, gentleness, absence of hard-heartedness; *hrīḥ*, modesty; *acāpalam*, freedom from restlessness, absence of unnecessary use of organs such as speech, hands and feet—.

Besides,

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत॥३॥

3. Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, freedom from malice, absence of haughtiness—these, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, are (the qualities) of one born destined to have the divine nature.

Tejaḥ, vigour, not the brightness of the skin; *kṣamā*, forgiveness, absence of internal perturbation when offended or assaulted—absence of anger has been explained by us as the calming down of a perturbed mind; thus, forgiveness and absence of anger are distinguished; *dhṛtiḥ*, fortitude, a particular function of the mind which removes the tedium of the body and

organs when they become exhausted, and being rejuvenated by which the body and organs do not feel any fatigue; *śaucam*, purity—is of two kinds: external, with the help of earth and water; and internal, the cleanliness of mind and intellect, the absence of such impurities as trickery, attachment, etc.; purity of these two kinds; *adrohaḥ*, freedom from malice, absence of the desire to injure others, absence of hatred; *na-atimānitā*, absence of haughtiness—too much self-esteem (*māna*) is *atimānaḥ*; one having that is *atimānī*; its abstract form is *atimānitā*; absence of that, *na-atimānitā*, that is, absence of the feeling of one's being too honourable. These (qualities) beginning with fearlessness and ending with this, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, *bhavanti*, are; (the qualities) *abhijātasya*, of one destined to have; —what kind of nature?—the *daivīm*, divine; *sampadam*, nature—of one destined to have divine attributes, of one who is worthy of the excellence of the gods, that is, of one who would be illustrations in future.

Thereafter, the demoniacal nature is now being stated:

दम्भो दर्पोऽतिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम्॥४॥

4. O son of Pṛthā, (the attributes) of one destined to have the demoniacal nature are religious ostentation, pride and haughtiness (174), anger as also rudeness and ignorance.

O son of Pṛthā, *dambhaḥ*, religious ostentation; *darpaḥ*, pride arising from wealth, relatives, etc.; *atimānaḥ*, haughtiness, as explained earlier; and *krodhaḥ*, anger; *eva ca*, as also; *pāruṣyam*, rudeness, using unkind words, e.g. to speak of a blind person as having eyes, an ugly person as handsome, a lowly born man as born of aristocracy, etc.; and *ajñānam*, ignorance, non-discriminating knowledge, false conception regarding what ought to be and ought not to be done; are (the attributes) *abhijātasya*, of one destined to have;—destined for what? in answer the Lord says—*āsurīm*, demoniacal; *sampadam*, nature.

The consequences of these natures are being stated:

दैवी सम्पद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता।
मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव॥५॥

5. The divine nature is the Liberation, the demoniacal is considered to be for inevitable bondage. Do not grieve, O son of Pāṇḍu! You are destined to have the divine nature.

That which is *daivī*, divine; *sampad*, nature; is *vimokṣāya*, for Liberation from the bondage of the world. The *āsurī*, demoniacal nature; *matā*, is considered to be; *nibandhāya*, for inevitable bondage. So also is the fiendish nature.

Now, when such a statement was made, the Lord, noticing Arjuna having this kind of inner cogitation—'Am I endowed with the demoniacal nature, or am I endowed with the divine nature?'—, says: *mā*, do not; *śucaḥ*, grieve, O son of Pāṇḍu! *Asi*, you are; *abhijātaḥ*, destined to have, born with the good fortune of having; *daivīm*, the divine; *sampadam*, nature; that is, you are destined for an illustrious future.

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु॥६॥

6. In this world there are two (kinds of) creation of beings: the divine and the demoniacal. The divine has been spoken of elaborately. Hear about the demoniacal from Me, O son of Pṛthā.

Dvau, two, in number; are the (kinds of) *bhūta-sargau*, creation of beings, of men. *Sarga* is derived from *sṛj* in the sense of that which is created. The persons themselves, who are created with the natures of gods and demons, are being spoken of as 'two creations of beings', which accords with the Upaniṣadic text, 'There were two classes of Prajāpati's sons, the gods and the demons' (Bṛ. 1.3.1). For, *asmin*, in this; *loke*, world, all (persons) can rationally be divided into two classes. Which are those two creations of beings? The answer is, the two are the *daiva*, divine; *eva ca*, and; the *āsura*, the demoniacal which are being discussed.

The Lord speaks of the need of restating the two that have been already referred to: *Daivaḥ*, the divine creation of beings; *proktaḥ*, has been spoken of; *vistaraśaḥ*, elaborately—in, 'Fearlessness, purity of mind,' etc. (1–3). But the demoniacal has not been spoken of in extenso. Hence, O son of Pṛthā, *śṛṇu*, hear of, understand; the *āsuram*, demoniacal; *me*, from Me,

from My speech which is being uttered in detail, so that this may be avoided.

Up to the end of the chapter the demoniacal nature is being presented as the qualities of creatures; for, when this is directly perceived, it becomes possible to eschew it:

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते॥७॥

7. Neither do the demoniacal persons understand what is to be done and what is not to be done; nor does purity, or even good conduct or truthfulness exist in them.

Na, neither; do the *āsurāḥ*, demoniacal; *janāḥ*, persons; *viduḥ*, understand; *pravṛttim*, what is to be done with regard to that which is a means to the human ends; and *nivṛttim*, what is not to be done, the opposite of that (former) and from which source of evil one should desist. Not only do they not know what is to be done and what is not to be done, *na*, nor; does *śaucam*, purity; *na api*, or even; *ācāraḥ*, good conduct; or *satyam*, truthfulness; *vidyate*, exist; *teṣu*, in them. The demons are verily bereft of purity and good conduct; they are deceitful and given to speaking lies.

Further,

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम्।
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम्॥८॥

8. They say that the world is unreal, it has no basis, it is without a God. It is born of mutual union brought about by passion! What other (cause can there be)?

Te, they, the demoniacal persons; *āhuḥ*, say; that the *jagat*, world; is *asatyam*, unreal—as we ourselves are prone to falsehood, so is this whole world unreal; *apratiṣṭham*, it has no basis, it does not have righteousness and unrighteousness as its basis; it is *anīśvaram*, without a God—nor is there a God who rules this (world) according to righteousness and unrighteousness (of beings). Hence they say that the world is godless. Moreover, it is *aparaspara-sambhūtam*, born of mutual union. The whole

world is born of the union of the male and female impelled by passion. (That union is) *kāma-haitukam*, brought about by passion. *Kāma-haitukam* and *kāma-hetukam* are the same. *Kim anyat*, what other (cause can there be)? There exists to other unseen cause such as righteousness, unrighteousness, etc. Certainly, the passion of living beings is the cause of the world. This is the view of the materialists.

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥ ९ ॥

9. Holding on to this view, (these people) who are of depraved character, of poor intellect, given to fearful actions and harmful, wax strong for the ruin of the world.

Avaṣṭabhya, holding on to; *etām*, this; *dṛṣṭim*, view; (these people) who are *naṣṭa-ātmānaḥ*, of depraved character, who have deviated from the disciplines leading to the other world; *alpa-budhayaḥ*, of poor intellect, whose intellect is indeed limited, engrossed with material things; *ugra-karmāṇaḥ*, given to fearful actions—who are cruel by nature; and *ahitāḥ*, harmful; that is inimical to the world; *prabhavanti*, wax strong; *kṣayāya*, for the ruin; *jagataḥ*, of the world. This is the construction.

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।
मोहाद्गृहीत्वाऽसद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥ १० ॥

10. Giving themselves up to insatiable passion, filled with vanity, pride and arrogance, adopting bad objectives due to delusion, and having impure resolves, they engage in actions.

And *āśritya*, giving themselves up to; *duṣpūram*, insatiable; *kāmam*, passion—a kind of desire; *dambha-māna-mada-anvitāḥ*, filled with vanity, pride and arrogance; *gṛhītvā*, adopting; *asad-grāhān*, bad objectives, evil intentions; *mohāt*, due to delusion, owing to non-discrimination; and *aśuci-vratāḥ*, having impure resolves; they *pravartante*, engage in actions in the world.

Further,

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः॥११॥

11. Beset with innumerable cares which end (only) with death, holding that the enjoyment of desirable objects is the highest goal, feeling sure that this is all.

Upāśritāḥ, beset with; *aparimeyām*, innumerable; *cintām*, cares—worries that defy estimation of their limits!, that is, constantly burdened with cares; *pralayāntām*, which end (only) with death; *kāma-upabhoga-paramāḥ*, holding that the enjoyment of desirable objects is the highest goal —*kāma* is derived in the sense of 'that which is desired for', viz. sound etc.; considering their enjoyment to be the highest; having their minds convinced thus that this alone, viz. the enjoyment of desirable objects, is the highest human goal; *niścitaḥ*, feeling sure; *iti*, that; *etāvat*, this is all—

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान्॥१२॥

12. Bound by hundreds of shackles in the form of hope, giving themselves wholly to passion and anger, they endeavour to amass wealth through foul means for the enjoyment of desirable objects.

Baddhāḥ, bound, being impelled, being lured from all sides; *āśā-pāśa-śataiḥ*, by hundreds of shackles in the from of hope—the hopes themselves are the shackles; by hundreds of these; *kāma-krodha-parāyaṇāḥ*, giving themselves wholly to passion and anger, having passion and anger as their highest resort; *īhante*, they endeavour; *artha-sañcayān*, to amass wealth; *anyāyena*, through foul means, that is by stealing others' wealth, etc.; *kāma-bhoga-artham*, for the enjoyment of desirable objects—in order to enjoy desirable objects, not for righteous acts.

Their intentions, too, are of this kind:

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम्।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम्॥१३॥

13. 'This has been gained by me today; I shall acquire this desired object. This is in hand; again, this wealth also will come to me.'

Idam, this thing; *labdham*, has been gained; *mayā*, by me; *adya*, today; *prāpsye*, I shall acquire; *idam*, this other; *manoratham*, desired object which is delectable to the mind. And *idam*, this; *asti*, is in hand; *punaḥ*, again; *idam*, this; *dhanam*, wealth; *api*, also; *bhaviṣyati*, will come; *me*, to me, in the next year. Thereby I shall become rich and famous.

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि।
ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी॥१४॥

14. 'That enemy has been killed by me, and I shall kill others as well. I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am well-established, mighty and happy.'

Asau, that; unconquerable *śatruḥ*, enemy, named Devadatta; *hataḥ*, has been killed; *mayā*, by me; and *haniṣye*, I shall kill; *aparān*, the other wretched ones. What will these pitiable persons do? There is none equal to me at all. *Aham*, I; am the *īśvaraḥ*, lord; I am the *bhogī*, enjoyer; and I am *siddhaḥ*, well-established in every respect—I am blessed with sons, and grandsons born of sons and daughters. Not only am I a man, but I am also *balavān*, mighty; and I myself am *sukhī*, happy; others are born to be but a burden to the earth!

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः॥१५॥

15. 'I am rich and high-born; who else is there similar to me? I shall perform sacrifices; I shall give, I shall rejoice,'—thus they are diversely deluded by non-discrimination.

Āḍhyaḥ, I am rich in wealth; *abhi-janavān*, high-born in respect of my lineage; my seven generations are endowed with Vedic learning etc. From that point of view also there is none equal to me. *Kaḥ anyaḥ*, who else; *asti*, is there; *sadṛśaḥ*, similar; *mayā*, to me? Besides, *yakṣye*, I shall perform sacrifices; in respect of sacrifices also I shall defeat others. *Dāsyāmi*, I shall give—to actors and others; *modiṣye*, I shall rejoice, and I shall derive intense joy. *Iti*, thus; are they *ajñāna-vimohitāḥ*, diversely deluded by non-discrimination, subject to various indiscrimination.

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ॥१६॥

16. Bewildered by numerous thoughts, caught in the net of delusion, (and) engrossed in the enjoyment of desirable objects, they fall into a foul hell.

Aneka-citta-vibhrāntāḥ, bewildered by numerous thoughts, confounded variously by thoughts of the kind stated above; *moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ*, caught in the net of delusion—*moha* is non-discrimination, lack of understanding; that itself is like a net because of its nature of covering; enshrouded by that; *prasaktāḥ*, engrossed; *kāma-bhogeṣu*, in the enjoyment of desirable objects, being immersed in that itself; they *patanti*, fall, owing to the sins accumulated thereby; *aśucau*, into a foul; *narake*, hell, such as Vaitaraṇī. (175)

आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम्॥१७॥

17. Self-conceited, haughty, filled with pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices which are so in name only, with ostentation and regardless of the injunctions.

Ātma-sambhāvitāḥ, self-conceited, considering themselves by themselves to be possessed of good qualities—not considered to be so by holy men; *stabdhāḥ*, haughty, having minds that are not humble; *dhana-māna-mada-anvitāḥ*, filled with (*anvita*) the pride (*māna*) and intoxication (*mada*) of wealth (*dhana*); *te*, they; *yajante*, perform sacrifices; *nāma-yajñaiḥ*, which are so in name only; *dambhena*, with ostentation, with religious hypocrisy; *avidhi-pūrvakam*, regardless of the injunctions—without subsidiary rites and proper methods of performance as enjoined.

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः॥१८॥

18. Resorting to egotism, power, arrogance, passion and anger, hating Me in their own and others' bodies, (they become) (176) envious by nature.

Ahaṅkāram, egotism—that which considers the Self to which have been imputed actual and imaginary qualities as 'I am this', which is called

ignorance and is most painful, and is the source of all ills as also of all evil deeds; so also *balam*, power, which seeks to defeat others and is associated with passion and desire; *darpam*, arrogance, a particular defect abiding in the mind, on the upsurge of which one transgresses righteousness; *kāmam*, passion with regard to women and others; *krodham*, anger at things that are undesirable;—*saṁśritāḥ*, resorting to these and other great evils; and further, *pradviṣantaḥ*, hating; *mām*, Me, God—transgression of My commands is hatred (towards Me); indulging in that, *atma-para-deheṣu*, in their own and others' bodies — (hating) Me who dwells in their own and others' bodies as the witness of their intellects and actions; (they become) *abhyasūyakāḥ*, envious by nature, intolerant of the qualities of those who tread the right path.

तानहं द्विषत: क्रूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान्।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु॥१९॥

19. I cast for ever those hateful, cruel, evil-doers in the worlds, the vilest of human beings, verily into the demoniacal classes.

Because of their defect of unrighteousness, *aham*, I; *kṣipāmi*, cast, hurl; *ajasram*, for ever; all *tān*, those; who are *dviṣataḥ*, hateful of Me; *krūrān*, cruel; and *aśubhān*, who are evil doers; *saṁsāreṣu*, in the worlds—who are on the paths leading to hell; who are the *nara-adhamān*, vilest of human beings, who are opposed to the right path, who are hostile to the pious people; *eva*, verily; *āsurīṣu*, into the demoniacal; *yoniṣu*, classes—tigers, lions, etc., which are full of evil deeds. The verb *cast* is to be connected with 'into the classes'.

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम्॥२०॥

20. Being born among the demoniacal species in births after births, the fools, without ever reaching Me, O son of Kuntī, attain conditions lower than that.

Āpannāḥ, being born, having acquired; (births) *āsurīm*, among the demoniacal; *yonim*, species; *janmani janmani*, in births after births; the *mūḍhāḥ*, fools, non-discriminating ones; being born in every birth into

species in which *tamas* prevails, and going downwards, *aprāpya eva*, without ever reaching, approaching; *mām*, Me, who am God; O son of Kuntī, *yānti*, they attain; *gatim*, conditions; *tataḥ adhamām*, lower even than that.

Since there is not the least possibility of attaining Me, what is implied by saying, 'without ever reaching Me', is, 'by not attaining the virtuous path enjoined by Me.'

This is being stated as a summary of all the demoniacal qualities. The triplet—under which are comprehended all the different demoniacal qualities though they are infinite in number, (and) by the avoidance of which (three) they (all the demoniacal qualities) become rejected, and which is the root of all evils—is being stated:

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयंत्यजेत्॥२१॥

21. This door of hell, which is the destroyer of the soul, is of three kinds—passion, anger and also greed. Therefore one should forsake these three.

Idam, this; *dvāram*, door; *narakasya*, of hell—for entering it; which is the *nāśanam*, destroyer; *ātmanaḥ*, of the soul; is *trividham*, of three kinds. It is that by the mere entry into which the soul perishes, that is, it ceases to be fit for attaining any human goal; hence it is said that it is the door which is the destroyer of the soul. Which is that? *Kāmaḥ*, passion; *krodhaḥ*, anger; and also *lobhaḥ*, greed. *Tasmāt*, therefore; *tyajet*, one should forsake; *etat trayam*, these three. Since this door is the destroyer of the soul, therefore one should renounce this group of three—passion etc. This is a eulogy of renunciation.

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम्॥२२॥

22. O son of Kuntī, a person who is free from these three doors to darkness strives for the good of the soul. Thereby he attains the highest Goal.

O son of Kuntī, *naraḥ*, a person; who is *vimuktaḥ*, free; *etaiḥ*, from these; *tribhiḥ*, three; *tamo-dvāraiḥ*, doors to darkness, that is, passion etc. which are doors to the darkness of hell consisting of sorrow and delusion; freed from these three which are such, *ācarati*, strives for;—for what?—*śreyaḥ*, the good; *ātmanaḥ*, of the soul: debarred by which (doors) he could not strive earlier, and on the dispelling of which he strives. *Tataḥ*, thereby, as a result of that striving; *yāti*, he attains; the *parām*, supreme; *gatim*, Goal, that is Liberation, as well. (177)

The scripture is instrumental in this complete renunciation of the demoniacal qualities and striving for what is good. Both can be undertaken on the authority of the scriptures, not otherwise. Hence,

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम्॥२३॥

23. Ignoring the precept of the scriptures, he who acts under the impulsion of passion,—he does not attain perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme Goal.

Utsṛjya, ignoring, setting aside; *śāstra-vidhim*, the precept of the scriptures, which is the source of the knowledge of what is duty and what is not—called injunction and prohibition; *yaḥ*, he who; *vartate*, acts; *kāma-kārataḥ*, under the impulsion of passion; *saḥ*, he; *na*, does not; *avāpnoti*, attain; *siddhim*, perfection, fitness for Liberation; nor even *sukham*, happiness in this world; nor even the *parām*, supreme, best; *gatim*, Goal—heaven or Liberation.

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि॥२४॥

24. Therefore, the scripture is your authority as regards the determination of what is to be done and what is not to be done. After understanding (your) duty as presented by scriptural injunction, you ought to perform (your duty) here.

Tasmāt, therefore; *śāstram*, the scripture; is *te*, your; *pramāṇam*, authority, the means of knowledge; *kārya-akārya-vyavasthitau*, as regards the determination of what is to be done and what is not to be done.

Therefore, *jñātvā*, after understanding; that which is your own *karma*, duty; *śāstra-vidhāna-uktam*, as presented by scriptural injunction—*vidhāna* is the same as *vidhi*, precept, in the form, 'you should do', 'you should not do'; as presented by that; *arhasi*, you ought; *kartum*, to perform; it *iha*, here. 'Here' is used for pointing out the sphere in which one is entitled to perform his duties.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[171] *This*—refers to all the three from 'fearlessness' to 'persistence in knowledge and yoga'.

[172] Persons treading the path of Jñāna-yoga or Karma-yoga have *sāttvika* qualities. Some of the qualities mentioned in the first three verses occur only in the former, whereas the others are found in both or only in the latter.—Tr.

[173] *Others*: Those in honour of the manes, humans and other beings. Brahma-yajña, the fifth sacrifice, is referred to separately by *svādhyāya*.

[174] Another reading is *abhimānaḥ*, self-conceit.—Tr.

[175] *Vaitaraṇī*: It is the most terrible place of punishment; a river filled with all kinds of filth—blood, hair, bones etc., and running with great impetuosity, hot and fetid. The other hells are Tāmisra, Andhatāmisra, Raurava, Kumbhīpāka, etc.

[176] As the finite verb is missing in the verse, we have supplied 'they become'. Ś. adds the verb *prabhavanti*, wax strong, from verse 9, and constructs the last portion thus: '...the envious ones wax strong.' Following Ś. S., however, one may combine this verse with the preceding verse by taking 'perform sacrifices' as the finite verb.—Tr.'

[177] Not only does he attain Liberation by renouncing the demoniacal qualities, but he also secures happiness in this world.

CHAPTER 17

THE THREE KINDS OF FAITH

Finding an occasion for a question from the Lord's statement, 'Therefore, the scripture is your authority,'—

Arjuna said:

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः।
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः॥१॥

1. But, (178) O Kṛṣṇa, what is the state (179) of those who, endued with faith, adore (180) by ignoring the injunctions of the scriptures? Is it *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*?

Tu, but; O Kṛṣṇa, *kā*, what; is the *niṣṭhā*, state; *teṣām*, of those—whosoever they may be; *ye*, who; being *anvitāḥ*, endued; *śraddhayā*, with faith, with the idea that there is something hereafter; *yajante*, adore gods and others; *utsṛjya*, by ignoring, setting aside; *śāstra-vidhim*, the injunctions of the scriptures, the injunctions of the Vedas and the Smṛtis? Is the state of those who are such *sattvam*, *sattva*; *āho*, or; *rajaḥ*, *rajas*; or *tamaḥ*, *tamas*? This is what is meant: Does the adoration of gods and others that they undertake come under the category of *sattva* or *rajas* or *tamas*?

By 'those who, endued with faith, adore by ignoring the injunctions of the scriptures' are here meant those who, not finding any injunction which can be characterized as 'enjoined by the Vedas' 'or enjoined by the Smṛtis', worship gods and others by merely observing the conduct of their elders. But, on the other hand, those who, though aware of some scriptural injunction, discard them and worship the gods and others in ways contrary to the injunctions, are not meant here by 'those who, ignoring scriptural injunctions, adore...'

Why?

Because of the qualifying phrase, 'being endued with faith'. For, it cannot be imagined that even when they are aware of some scriptural injunction about worship of gods and others, they discard this out of their

faithlessness, and yet they engage in the worship of gods and others enjoined by those scriptures by becoming imbued with faith! Therefore, by 'those who, endued with faith, adore by ignoring the injunctions of the scriptures' are here meant those very ones mentioned earlier.

An answer to this question relating to a general topic cannot be given without splitting it up. Hence,—

The Blessed Lord said:

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु॥२॥

2. That faith of the embodied beings, born of their own nature, is threefold—born of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Hear about it.

Sā, that; *śraddhā*, faith, the state about which you ask; *dehinām*, of the embodied beings; *svabhāvajā*, born of their own nature—by *svabhāva* (nature) is meant that latent impression of virtuous acts etc. acquired in the past lives, which becomes manifest at the time of death; what arises out of that is *svabhāvajā*—; is *trividhā*, threefold, of three kinds; *sāttvikī*, born of *sattva*, and related to worship of gods, etc.; *rājasī*, born of *rajas*, concerning worship of Yakṣas (a class of demigods, Kubera and others), Rakṣas (ogres, Nairṛti and others); and *tāmasī*, born of *tamas*, concerning worship of ghosts, goblins and others. Thus it is of three kinds. *Sṛṇu*, hear; *tām*, about it, that faith, as it is being stated.

That (faith) is threefold as follows:

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः॥३॥

3. O scion of the Bharata dynasty, the faith of all beings is in accordance with their minds. This person is made up of faith as the dominant factor. He is verily what his faith is.

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, the *śraddhā*, faith; *sarvasya*, of all beings; *bhavati*, is; *sattva-anurūpā*, in accordance with their minds, in accordance with the internal organ which is imbued with particular impression. If this is so, what follows? The answer is: *Ayam*, this; *puruṣaḥ*,

person, the transmigrating soul; is *śraddhāmayaḥ*, made up of faith as the dominating factor. How? *Saḥ*, he, the individual soul; is *eva*, verily; *saḥ*, that; *yaḥ yat-śraddhaḥ*, which is the faith of that individual—he surely conforms to his faith.

And, as a consequence, a person's steadfastness in *sattva* etc. is to be inferred from the grounds of his actions such as worship of gods etc. Hence the Lord says:

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसा:।
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जना:॥४॥

4. Those having the *sattva* quality worship the gods; those having *rajas*, the demi-gods and ogres; and other people possessed of *tamas* worship ghosts and the hosts of spirits.

Sāttvikāḥ, those having the *sattva* quality, those steadfast in *sattva*; *yajante*, worship; *devān*, the gods; *rājasāḥ*, those having *rajas*; (worship) *yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi*, the demi-gods and ogres; and *anye*, other; *janāḥ*, people; *tāmasāḥ*, possessed of *tamas*; *yajante*, worship; *pretān*, ghosts; and *bhūta-gaṇān*, the hosts of spirits—Sapta-mātṛkās (the Seven Mothers) and others.

Thus, in the context of abandonment of scriptural injunctions, the states of *sattva* etc. have been determined through their effects. As regards that, it is only one in thousands who, being established in *sattva*, becomes devoted to the adoration of gods. But, to be sure, creatures are mostly rooted deeply in rajas or *tamas*. How?

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जना:।
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ता: कामरागबलान्विता:॥५॥

5. Those persons who, given to ostentation and pride, and possessed of passion, attachment and strength, undertake severe austerities not sanctioned in the scriptures;

Ye, those; *janāḥ*, persons; who *tapyante*, undertake, perform; *ghoram*, severe; *tapaḥ*, austerity, productive of pain to oneself as also to creatures; *aśāstra-vihitam*, not sanctioned by the scriptures; they, being *dambha-ahaṅkāra-saṁyuktāḥ*, given to ostentation and pride; and *kāma-rāga-bala-*

anvitāḥ, impelled by the strength of passion and attachment, or possessed of passion, attachment and strength (181)—.

कर्शयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः।
मां चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान्॥६॥

6. (And who,) being non-discriminating, torture all the organs in the body as also even Me who reside in the body,—know them as possessed of demoniacal conviction.

(And who,) *acetasaḥ*, being non-discriminating; *karśayantaḥ*, torture; *bhūta-grāmam*, all the organs; *śarīrastham*, in the body, *ca*, as also; torture *eva*, even; *mām*, Me; *antaḥ-śarīra-stham*, who reside in the body as the witness of its actions and intellect—non-adherence to My injunctions itself is 'torturing Me'; *viddhi*, know; *tān*, them; *āsura-niścayān*, as possessed of demoniacal convictions. Know them so that they may be avoided. This is an instruction.

The liking of persons possessing the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* for foods that are divided into three groups, viz. succulent, oleaginous, etc., is respectively being shown here so that, by knowing the presence of the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* (in oneself) from the indications of the degree of one's preference for particular foods as are *succulent*, *oleaginous*, etc., one may avoid foods having the characteristics of *rajas* and *tamas*, and accept food with the characteristics of *sattva*. Similarly, sacrifices etc. also are being explained here under three categories according to the distinguishing quality of *sattva* etc. So that one may reject those known to be born of *rajas* and *tamas*, and undertake only those born of *sattva*.

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु॥७॥

7. Food also, which is dear to all, is of three kinds; and so also are sacrifices, austerity and charity. Listen to this classification of them.

Ahāraḥ, food; *api tu*, also; which is *priyaḥ*, dear; *sarvasya*, to all (182) who eat it; *bhavati*, is; *trividhaḥ*, of three kinds; so also *yajñaḥ*, sacrifices; similarly, *tapaḥ*, austerity; *tathā*, so also; *dānam*, charity. *Śṛṇu*, listen; to

imam, this; *bhedam*, classification; *teṣām*, of them, of food etc., which is going to be stated.

आयु:सत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धना: ।
रस्या: स्निग्धा: स्थिरा हृद्या आहारा: सात्त्विकप्रिया:॥८॥

8. Foods that augment life, firmness of mind, strength, health, happiness and delight, and which are succulent, oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are dear to one endowed with *sattva*.

Ahāraḥ, foods; *āyuḥ-sattva-bala-ārogya-sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ*, that augment life, firmness of mind, strength, health, delight; (183) and which are *rasyāḥ*, succulent; *snigdhāḥ*, oleaginous; *sthirāḥ*, substantial, lasting in the body for long; (184) and *hṛdyāḥ*, agreeable, to one's liking; are *sāttvika-priyāḥ*, dear to one endowed with *sattva*.

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिन: ।
आहारा राजसस्यष्टा दु:खशोकामयप्रदा:॥९॥

9. Foods that are bitter, sour, salty, very hot, pungent, dry and burning, and which produce pain, sorrow and disease, are dear to one having *rajas*.

Foods that are *kaṭu-amla-lavaṇa-atyuṣṇa-tīkṣṇa-rūkṣa-vidāhinaḥ*, bitter, sour, salty, very hot (—'very' is to be connected with all, viz. bitter etc.; that is very bitter, very sour, etc.—), pungent, dry (185) and burning; and *duḥkha-śoka-āmaya-pradāḥ*, which produce pain, sorrow and disease; (186) are *rājasasyaiṣṭāḥ*, dear to one having *rajas*.

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत्।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम्॥१०॥

10. Food which is not properly cooked, lacking in essence, putrid and stale, and even ort and that which is unfit for sacrifice, is dear to one possessed of *tamas*.

Bhojanam, food; which is *yāta-yāmam*, not properly cooked (187) (—because food that has lost its essence is referred to by the word *gatarasam*—); *gata-rasam*, lacking in essence; *pūti*, putrid; and *paryuṣitam*, stale, cooked on the previous day and kept overnight; and even *ucchiṣṭam*, ort,

remnants of a meal; and *amedhyam*, that which is unfit for sacrifice;—this kind of food is *tāmasa-priyam*, dear to one possessed of *tamas*.

Now then, sacrifices of three kinds are being stated:

अफलाकांक्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते।
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः॥११॥

11. That sacrifice which is in accordance with the injunctions, (and is) performed by persons who do not hanker after results, and with the mental conviction that it is surely obligatory, is done through *sattva*.

Saḥ, that; *yajñaḥ*, sacrifice; *vidhi-dṛṣṭaḥ*, which is in accordance with the injunctions, which is known through scriptural injunctions; (and) *yaḥ*, which; is *ijyate*, performed; *a-phala-ākāṅkṣibhiḥ*, by persons who do not hanker after results; *manaḥ samādhāya*, with the mental conviction; *iti*, that; *yaṣṭavyam eva*, it is surely obligatory, their duty is to accomplish the sacrifice just as it should be—with the firm idea, 'I have no human goal to achieve through this'—; is said to be a sacrifice which is *sāttvikaḥ*, done through *sattva*.

अभिसन्धाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत्।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम्॥१२॥

12. But that sacrifice which is performed having in view a result, as also for ostentation,—know that sacrifice to be done through *rajas*, O greatest among the descendants of Bharata.

Tu, but; *yat*, that which; is *ijyate*, performed; *abhisandhāya*, having in view; a *phalam*, result; *api ca*, as also; *dambhārtham*, for ostentation; *viddhi*, know; *tam*, that; *yajñam*, sacrifice; to be *rājasam*, done through *rajas*; *bharataśreṣṭha*, O greatest among the descendants of Bharata.

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम्।
श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते॥१३॥

13. They declare that sacrifice as 'done through *tamas*' which is contrary to injunction, in which food is not distributed, in which *mantras*

are not used, in which offerings are not made to priests, and which is devoid of faith.

Paricakṣate, they declare; that *yajñam*, sacrifice; as *tāmasam*, done through *tamas*; which is *vidhi-hīnam*, contrary to injunction, opposed to what is enjoined; *asṛṣṭānnam*, in which food is not distributed—a sacrifice in which food (*annam*) is not distributed (*asṛṣṭam*) to Brāhmaṇas; *mantra-hīnam*, in which *mantras* are not used, which is bereft of *mantras*, intonation and distinct pronunciation; *adakṣiṇam*, in which offerings are not made to priests as prescribed; and which is *śraddhā-virahitam*, devoid of faith.

After that, now is being stated the three kinds of austerity:

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम्।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते॥१४॥

14. The worship of gods, twice-borns, venerable persons and the wise; purity, straightforwardness, celibacy and non-injury,—are said to be bodily austerity.

Deva-dvija-guru-prājña-pūjanam, the worship of gods, twice-borns, venerable persons and the wise; *śaucam*, purity; *ārjavam*, straightforwardness; *brahmacaryam*, celibacy; and *ahiṁsā*, non-injury; *ucyate*, are said to be; *sārīram*, bodily; *tapaḥ*, austerity, austerity accomplished through the body: that which can be performed by the agent, etc. (188), (that is) with the whole group of body and organs, in which the body predominates; for the Lord will say, ‘these five are its causes’ (18.15).

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत्।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते॥१५॥

15. That speech which causes no pain, which is true, agreeable and beneficial; as well as the practice of study of the scriptures,—is said to be austerity of speech.

Yat, that; *vākyam*, speech; *anudvegakaram*, which causes no pain, which is not hurtful to creatures; which is *satyam*, true; *priya-hitam*, agreeable and beneficial with regard to facts seen or unseen—.

‘Speech’ is qualified by characteristics such as being not hurtful, etc. The *ca* (and) is used for grouping together the qualifying characteristics. When a sentence is used in order to make another understand, if it happens to be avoid of one or two or three among the qualities—truthfulness, agreeability, beneficialness, and non-hurtfulness—, then it is not austerity of speech.

As in the case of a truthful utterance there would occur a want of austerity of speech if it be lacking in one or two or three of the others, so also in the case of an agreeable utterance there would be no austerity of speech were it to be without one or two or three of the others; and similarly, there would be no austerity of speech even in a beneficial utterance which is without one or two or three of the others.

What, again, is that austerity (of speech)? That utterance which is true as also not hurtful, and is agreeable and beneficial, is the highest austerity of speech: As for example, the utterance, ‘Be calm, my boy. Practise study and yoga. Thereby you will gain the highest.’

Svādhyāya-abhyasanam, the practice of the study of scriptures, as is enjoined; *ca eva*, as well; *ucyate*, is said to be; *tapaḥ*, austerity; *vāṅmayam*, of speech.

मन:प्रसाद: सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रह: ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते॥१६॥

16. Tranquillity of mind, gentleness, reticence, withdrawal of the mind, purity of heart,—these are what is called mental austerity.

Manaḥ-prasādaḥ, tranquillity of mind, making the mind free from anxiety; *saumyatvam*, gentleness—that which is called kindliness of spirit, (189) a certain condition of the mind resulting in calmness of the face, etc.; *maunam*, reticence—since even the control of speech follows from the control of mind, therefore the cause is implied by the effect; so *maunam* means control of the mind; (190) *ātma-vinigrahaḥ*, withdrawal of the mind —withdrawal of the mind in a general way, from everything; *maunam* (control of the mind) is the mind’s withdrawal with regard to speech alone; this is the distinction—; *bhāva-saṁśuddhiḥ*, purity of heart, absence of

trickery while dealing with others; *iti etat*, these are; what is *ucyate*, called; *mānasam*, mental; *tapaḥ*, austerity.

How the above-described bodily, verbal and mental austerities undertaken by people are divided into three classes—of *sattva* etc.—is being stated:

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः।
अफलाकांक्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते॥१७॥

17. When that threefold austerity is undertaken with supreme faith by people who do not hanker after results and are self-controlled, they speak of it as born of *sattva*.

When *tat*, that; *trividham*, threefold—based on three factors; *tapaḥ*, austerity, which is being discussed; is *taptam*, undertaken, practised; *parayā*, with supreme, with the highest; *śraddhayā*, faith, belief in God and the other world; *naraiḥ*, by people, by its performers; *aphala-ākāṅkṣibhiḥ*, who do not hanker after results, who are devoid of desire for results; and *yuktaiḥ*, who are self-controlled;—that austerity which is of this kind, the noble people *paricakṣate*, speak of it; as *sāttvikam*, born of *sattva*.

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत्।
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम्॥१८॥

18. That austerity which is undertaken for earning a name, being honoured and worshipped, and also ostentatiously,—that is spoken of as born of *rajas*, belonging to this world, uncertain and transitory.

Yat, that; *tapaḥ*, austerity; which is *kriyate*, undertaken; *satkāra-māna-pūjārtham*, for earning a name, being honoured and worshipped—for earning a name, (that is) for being spoken of thus: 'This Brāhmaṇa, who is given to austerity, is pious'; for being honoured by (others) standing up respectfully, salutation, etc.; for being worshipped with washing of feet, adoration, feeding, etc.; for these—; *ca eva*, and also, (that) austerity which is performed *dambhena*, ostentatiously; *tat*, that; *proktam*, is spoken of; as *rājasam*, born of rajas; *iha*, belonging to this world; (191) *calam*, uncertain—its result being unpredictable; and *adhruvam*, transitory.

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥१९॥

19. That austerity which is undertaken with a foolish intent, by causing pain to oneself, or for the destruction of others—that is said to be born of *tamas*.

Yat, that; *tapaḥ*, austerity; which is *kriyate*, undertaken; *mūḍha-grāheṇa*, with a foolish intent, with a conviction arising out of non-discriminating; *pīḍayā*, causing pain; *ātmanaḥ*, to oneself (to one's body etc.); *vā*, or; *utsādanārtham*, for the destruction; *parasya*, of another; *tat*, that; is *udāhṛtam*, said to be; an austerity *tāmasam*, born of *tamas*.

Now the classification of charity is being spoken of:

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम्॥२०॥

20. That gift is referred to as born of *sattva* which gift is given with the idea that it ought to be given, to one who will not serve in return, and at the (proper) place, (proper) time and to a (proper) person.

Tat, that; *dānam*, gift; is *smṛtam*, referred to; as *sāttvikam*, born of *sattva*; *yat*, which gift; is *dīyate*, given; with the idea in mind *dātavyam iti*, that it ought to be given without consideration; *anupakāriṇe*, to one who will not serve in return, and even to one who can; and *deśe*, at the (proper) place—in holy places like Kurukṣetra etc.; *kāle*, at the (proper) time—during Saṅkrānti (192) etc.; and *pātre*, to a (proper) person—to one who is versed in the Vedas together with their six branches, and such others.

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम्॥२१॥

21. But the gift which is given expecting reciprocation, or again, with a desire for its result, and which is given grudgingly,—that is considered to be born of *rajas*.

Tu, but; the *dānam*, gift; *yat*, which; *dīyate*, is made; *prati-upakāra-artham*, expecting reciprocation—with this purpose in view: 'In time, he will render service in return'—; *vā punaḥ*, or again; *uddiśya*, with a desire

for; its *phalam*, result—that, 'To me will accrue some unseen reward of this gift'—; and which is *dīyate*, given; *parikliṣṭam*, grudgingly, with reluctance; *tat*, that; is *smṛtam*, considered to be; *rājasam*, born of *rajas*.

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥२२॥

22. The gift which is made at an improper place and time, and to undeserving persons, without proper treatment and with disdain, is declared to be born of *tamas*.

Tat, that; *dānam*, gift; *yat*, which; *dīyate*, is given; *adeśakāle*, at an improper place and time—in an unholy place full of barbarians and impure things, etc.; at an improper time: which is not well known as productive of merit; without such specially as Saṅkrānti etc.—; and *apātrebhyaḥ*, to undeserving persons, to fools, thieves and others;—and even when the place etc. are proper—*asatkṛtam*, without proper treatment, without sweet words, washing of feet, worship, etc.; and *avajñātam*, with disdain, with insults to the recipient; is *udāhṛtam*, declared to be; *tāmasam*, born of *tamas*.

This advice is being imparted for making sacrifices, gifts, austerities, etc. perfect:

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा॥२३॥

23. '*Om-tat-sat*' [193]—this is considered to be the threefold designation of Brahman. The Brāhmaṇas and Vedas and the sacrifices were ordained by that in the days of yore.

Om, tat, sat—iti, this; is *smṛtaḥ*, considered, regarded, in the Vedānta, by the knowers of Brahman; to be the *trividhaḥ*, threefold; *nirdeśaḥ*, designation, mention by name—*nirdeśa* is that by which a thing is specified; *brahmaṇaḥ*, of Brahman. The Brāhmaṇas and the Vedas and the sacrifices were *vihitāḥ*, ordained, [194] created; *tena*, by that threefold designation; *purā*, in the days of yore [195]—this is said by way of eulogizing the designation.

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः।
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम्॥२४॥

24. Therefore, acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity as prescribed through injunctions, of those who study and expound the Vedas, always commence after uttering the syllable *Om*.

Tasmāt, therefore; *yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-kriyāḥ*, acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity—acts in the form of sacrifice etc.; *vidhāna-uktāḥ*, as prescribed through injunctions, as ordained by the scriptures; *brahma-vādinām*, of those who study and expound the Vedas; *satatam*, always; *pravartante*, commence; *udāhṛtya*, after uttering; *om iti*, the syllable *Om*.

तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः।
दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकांक्षिभिः॥२५॥

25. After (uttering) the word *tat*, acts of sacrifice and austerity as also the various acts of charity are performed without regard for results by persons aspiring for Liberation.

After uttering the word *tat*, which is a name of Brahman, *yajña-tapaḥ-kriyāḥ*, acts of sacrifice and austerity; *ca*, as also; *vividhāḥ*, the various; *dāna-kriyāḥ*, acts of charity, such as gift of land, gold, etc.; *kriyante*, are performed; *anabhisandhāya*, without regard for; *phalam*, results of actions; *mokṣa-kāṅkṣibhiḥ*, by persons aspiring for Liberation.

The use of the words *Om* and *tat* has been stated. Thereafter, the use of the word *sat* is being presently stated:

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते।
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते॥२६॥

26. This word *sat* is used with regard to (something) coming into being and with regard to (someone) becoming good. So also, O son of Pṛthā, the word *sat* is used with regard to an auspicious rite.

Etat, this; *sat iti*, word *sat*, a name of Brahman; *prayujyate*, is used, is uttered; *sad-bhāve*, with regard to (something) coming into being—with regard to coming into existence of something that was not there, as for instance the birth of a son who was not there before; so also *sādhu-bhāve*,

with regard to (someone) becoming good—*sādhu-bhāva* means coming to possess good conduct by an evil person who had bad behaviour; with regard to that. *Tathā*, so also, O Son of Pṛthā; the *sat-śabdaḥ*, word *sat*; *yujyate* (—which is the same as *prayujyate*—), is used; *praśaste karmaṇi*, with regard to an auspicious rite, such as marriage etc.

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते॥२७॥

27. And the steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and charity is spoken of as *sat*. And even the action meant for these is, verily, called as *sat* (good).

And *sthitiḥ*, steadfastness; that is *yajñe*, in sacrifice, in the act of sacrifice; the steadfastness that is *tapasi*, in austerity; and the steadfastness that is *dāne*, in charity; that *ucyate*, is spoken of; *sat iti*, as *sat*, by learned persons. And *eva*, even; the *karma*, action; *tad-arthīyam*, meant for these—for sacrifice, charity and austerity, or for Him whose names are under discussion, that is for God; is *eva*, verily; *abhidhīyate*, called; *sat iti*, as *sat* (good).

Thus, in this way, the acts of sacrifice, austerity, etc., even when they are devoid of *sattva* and goodness, become good and endued with *sattva* by the use of the three names of Brahman with faith.

And as regards those (sacrifice etc.), since in all cases everything is performed with a predominance of faith, therefore—

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत्।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह॥२८॥

28. O son of Pṛthā, whatever is offered in sacrifice and given in charity, as also whatever austerity is undertaken or whatever is done without faith, is said to be of no avail. And it is of no consequence after death, nor here.

O son of Pṛthā, whatever is *hutam*, offered in sacrifice, poured as oblation; and *dattam*, given in charity to Brāhmaṇas, *aśraddhayā*, without faith; whatever *tapaḥ*, austerity; is *taptam*, performed without faith; so also, whatever is *kṛtam*, done without faith, e.g. praise, salutation, etc.; all that *ucyate*, is said to be; *asat iti*, of no avail, since it is outside the course of

disciplines leading to Me. *Ca*, and, although involving great effort; *na ca tat*, it is of no consequence; *pretya*, after death, for producing (some) result; *na*, nor even for any result; *iha*, because it is condemned by the wise. (196)

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[178] 'But' is used to present a standpoint distinct from the earlier ones understood from 16.23–4.—S.

[179] i.e., where do the rites undertaken by them end?

[180] *Adore*—perform sacrifices, distribute wealth etc. in honour of gods and others.

[181] *Kāma-rāga* can also mean desirable objects and the desire to enjoy them.

[182] Here Aṣṭ. adds *prāṇinaḥ* (creatures).—Tr.

[183] *Life*—a brilliant life; *firmness of mind* or vigour; *strength*—ability of body and organs; *happiness*—pleasure of mind; *delight*—great joy even at seeing other persons prosperous.

[184] Beneficial to the body for long.

[185] Without fat.

[186] *Pain*, immediate suffering; *sorrow*, grief arising from not having that desired food.

[187] *Yāta-yāmam* lit. means 'cooked three hours ago', that which has lost its essence; but here it is translated as 'not properly cooked' to avoid tautology, for the next word *gata-rasam*, too, means lacking in essence.—Tr.

[188] See 18. 13-15.—Tr.

[189] Kindliness towards all, and also not entertaining any evil thought towards anybody.

[190] Or, *maunam* may mean thinking of the Self, the attitude of a meditator. The context being of 'mental austerity', reticence is

explained as control of the mind with regard to speech.

[191] that is yielding fruits only in this world.

[192] During the passage of the sun or any planetary body from one zodiacal sign into another. —V.S.A.

[193] ‘*Om*, That, Existence’: ‘*Om iti brahma*, *Om* is Brahman’ (Tai. 1.8.1); ‘*Tattvamasi*, Thou art *That*’ (Ch. 6.8.7); and ‘*Sadeva somya idamagra āsīt*, This was *Existence* alone in the beginning, O amiable one’ (Ch. 6.2.1)—in these texts Brahman is indicated by the words *Om, tat, sat*.

[194] When some defect arises in sacrifice etc., then this is corrected by uttering one of these words—*Om, tat, sat*.

[195] In the beginning of creation by Prajāpati.

[196] Thus it is established in this chapter that, among persons who are not at all versed in the scriptures, but are possessed of (either of the) three characteristics of *sattva*, (*rajas*) etc., only those shall attain to Liberation who steadfastly resort to *sattva* alone by partaking of *sāttvika* food, (performing *sāttvika* sacrifices) etc. to the exclusion of *rājasika* and *tāmasika* food etc., who destroy any defect that might arise in sacrifice etc. by uttering the names of Brahman, who have fully purified their intellect, and who have attained to the realization of Truth arising from one’s being endowed with such disciplines as hearing and thinking (*śravaṇa*, *manana*) of, and meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on Brahman.

CHAPTER 18

MONASTICISM AND LIBERATION

This chapter is begun with a view to stating, by summing up in it, the message of the whole scripture, the *Gītā*, as also the entire purport of the Vedas. For the teaching imparted in all the earlier chapters is met within this chapter. Arjuna, on his part, wishing to ascertain the distinction between the implication of the two words *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*, asks (197):

Arjuna said:

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम्।
त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन॥१॥

1. O mighty-armed Hṛṣīkeśa, O slayer of (the demon) Keśī, I want to know severally the truth about *sannyāsa* as also about *tyāga*.

O mighty-armed Hṛṣīkeśa, *keśi-niṣūdana*, O slayer of (the demon) Kesī; *icchāmi*, I want; *veditum*, to know; *pṛthak*, severally, through their mutual distinctions; *tattvam*, the truth, the intrinsic nature, that is the real meaning; *sannyāsasya*, of *sannyāsa*, that is the meaning of the word *sannyāsa*; *ca*, as also; *tyāgasya*, of *tyāga*, that is the meaning of the word *tyāga*.

Keśī was a demon who had assumed the form of a horse, and Lord Vāsudeva had killed him. Hence He is addressed by that name (Keśi-niṣūdana) by Arjuna.

The word *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*, used in various places in the preceding chapters, are not explicit in their implications. Therefore, in order to determine them for Arjuna who had put the question,—

The Blessed Lord said:

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः॥२॥

2. The learned ones know *sannyāsa* to be the giving up of actions done with a desire for reward. The adepts call the abandonment of the results of

all works as *tyāga*.

Some *kavayaḥ*, learned ones; *viduḥ*, know; *sannyāsam*, *sannyāsa*, the meaning of the word *sannyāsa*, the non-performance of what comes as a duty; to be the *nyāsam*, giving up; *karmaṇām*, of actions; *kāmyānām*, done with a desire for reward, e.g. Horse-sacrifice etc. *Sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaḥ*, abandonment of the results of all actions, means the giving up of the results accruing to oneself from all actions—the daily obligatory and the occasional (*nitya* and *naimittika*) that are performed. *Vicakṣaṇāḥ*, the adepts, the learned ones; *prāhuḥ*, call, speak of that; as *tyāgam*, *tyāga*, as the meaning of the word *tyāga*.

Even if 'the giving up of actions for desired results' or 'the abandonment of results' be the intended meaning, in either case the one meaning of the words *sannyāsa* and *tyāga* amounts only to *tyāga* (giving up); they do not imply distinct categories as do the words 'pot' and 'cloth'.

Objection: Well, is it not that they say the daily obligatory (*nitya*) and the occasional (*naimittika*) rites and duties have no results at all? How is the giving up of their results spoken of—like the abandoning of a son of a barren woman?!

Reply: This defect does not arise. It is the intention of the Lord that the *nitya-karmas* (daily obligatory duties) also have results; for the Lord will say, 'The threefold results of actions—the undesirable, the desirable and the mixed—accrue after death to those who do not resort to *tyāga*', and also, 'but never to those who resort to *sannyāsa* (monks)' (12). Indeed, by showing that, it is only in the case of *sannyāsins* (monks) alone that there is no connection with the results of actions, the Lord asserts in, '... accrue after death to those who do not resort to *tyāga* (renunciation)' (ibid.), that the result of daily obligatory (*nitya*) duties accrue to those who are not *sannyāsins* (monks).

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिण:।
यज्ञदानतप:कर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे॥३॥

3. Some learned persons say that action, beset with evil (as it is), should be given up, and others (say) that the practice of sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be given up.

Eke, some; *manīṣiṇaḥ*, learned ones, subscribing to the views of the Sāṅkhyas and others; *prāhuḥ*, say; that *doṣavat*, beset with evil (as it is);—what is it?—*karma*, action, all actions, because they are the cause of bondage; *tyājyam*, should be given up even by those who are eligible for actions (rites and duties). Or, it (action) is to be given up *doṣavat*, just as defects such as attachment etc. are renounced. *Ca* and, in that very context; *apare*, others; (say) that *yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-karma*, the practice of sacrifice, charity and austerity; *na tyājyam*, should not be given up.

These alternatives are with regard to only those who are qualified for action, but not with regard to the monks who are steadfast in Knowledge and have gone beyond the stages of life. This discussion is not concerned with those who are held to be outside the scope of eligibility for action in the assertion (by the Lord), 'The steadfastness in the Yoga of Knowledge by men of realization was spoken of by Me in the days of yore' (see 3.3).

Objection: Well, just as those who are qualified for rites and duties and who have their distinct steadfastness are being considered here in the chapter summarizing the entire scripture, though they have been dealt with earlier in '...through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3), similarly, let even the men of realization who are steadfast in Knowledge be considered here.

Reply: No, because it is not logical that their renunciation should result from delusion and sorrow (cf. 7 and 8). The men of realization do not perceive in the Self the sorrows arising from physical torment; for it has been shown that desire etc. are attributes only of the field (body) (see 13.6). Therefore, they do not renounce action but of fear for physical trouble and pain. Nor do they perceive actions in the Self, on account of which they should give up obligatory duties out of delusion. In fact, they renounce with the conviction that 'action belongs to the organs' (see 3.28); 'I certainly do not do anything' (see 5.8); for, the mode of renunciation of an enlightened person was shown in, '...having given up all actions mentally' (5.13). Therefore, those others who are qualified for rites and duties, who are unenlightened about the Self, and for whom renunciation is possible out of delusion and from fear of physical trouble, are alone condemned as persons who, being possessed of *tamas* and *rajas*, resort to renunciation. And this is

done with a view to eulogizing the renunciation of the results of rites and duties by the unenlightened men of action.

Besides, the men of renunciation in the real sense have been particularly pointed out in, 'who has renounced every undertaking,' 'who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded' (12.16, 19), and also (while determining) the characteristics of one who has transcended the *guṇas* (Chapter 14). The Lord will further say, '...which is the supreme consummation of Knowledge' (50). Therefore the monks steadfast in Knowledge are not intended to be spoken of here. It is only the abandoning of the *results* of action which, by virtue of its being imbued with the quality of *sattva*, is spoken of as *sannyāsa* in contrast to the renunciation of actions which is possessed of *tamas* etc.; it is not *sannyāsa* in the primary sense—the renunciation of all actions.

Objection: According to the reason shown in the text, 'Since it is not possible for one who holds on to a body to give up actions entirely' (11), may it not be argued that the word *sannyāsa* is certainly used in the primary sense because it is impossible to abandon all works?

Reply: No, for the text adducing the reason is meant for eulogy. Just as, 'From renunciation immediately (follows) Peace' (12.12), is a mere eulogy of renunciation of the fruits of action, it having been enjoined on Arjuna who was unenlightened and incapable of undertaking the various alternatives (paths) as stated earlier, so also is this sentence, 'Since it is not possible for one who holds on to a body to give up actions entirely' (11), meant for eulogizing the renunciation of the results of all actions. No one can point out an exception to the proposition that 'having given up all actions mentally, (the embodied man of self-control) continues happily ... without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all' (see 5.13). Therefore these alternative views regarding *sannyāsa* and *tyāga* are concerned only with those who are qualified for rites and duties. But the enlightened ones who have realized the supreme Truth are competent only for steadfastness in Knowledge, which is characterized by renunciation of all actions; not for anything else. Hence, they do not come within the purview of the alternative views. Thus has this been pointed out by us in

connection with the text, '...he who knows this One as indestructible...' (2.21) as also in the beginning of the third chapter.

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविध: सम्प्रकीर्तित:॥४॥

4. O the most excellent among the descendants of Bharata, hear from Me the firm conclusion regarding that *tyāga*. For, O greatest among men, *tyāga* has been clearly declared to be of three kinds.

Bharata-sattama, O the most excellent among the descendants of Bharata; *śṛṇu*, hear, understand; *me*, from Me, from My statement; *niścayam*, the firm conclusion; *tatra tyāge*, regarding that *tyāga*, regarding these alternative views on *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* as they have been shown. *Hi*, for; *puruṣavyāghra*, O greatest among men; *tyāgaḥ*, *tyāga*; *samprakīrtitaḥ*, has been clearly declared, has been distinctly spoken of in the scriptures; to be *trividhaḥ*, of three kinds, threefold, under the classes of *tāmasa* (those based on *tamas*) (198), etc. The Lord has used the word *tyāga* with the idea that the (primary) meanings of *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* are verily the same.

Since it is difficult to comprehend this idea, that the primary meanings of the words *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* can be threefold under the classification based on *tamas* etc. in the case of one who is unenlightened and who is qualified for rites and duties—but not in the case of one who has realized the supreme Goal—, therefore no one else is capable of speaking the truth in this connection. Hence, listen to the firm conclusion of the Lord with regard to the supreme Truth as revealed by the scriptures.

Which, again, is this firm conclusion? In reply the Lord says:

यज्ञदानतप:कर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत्।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम्॥५॥

5. The practice of sacrifice, charity and austerity is not to be abandoned; it is surely to be undertaken. Sacrifice, charity and austerity are verily the purifiers of the wise.

Yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-karma, the practice of sacrifice, charity and austerity —this threefold practice; *na tyājyam*, is not to be abandoned; *tat*, it; is *eva*,

surely; *kāryam*, to be undertaken. Why? *Yajñaḥ*, sacrifice; *dānam*, charity; and *tapaḥ*, austerity; are *eva*, verily; *pāvanāni*, the purifiers, the causes of sanctification; *manīṣiṇām*, of the wise, that is of those who do not seek results for themselves.

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम्॥६॥

6. But even these actions have to be undertaken by renouncing attachment and (hankering for) results. This is My firm and best conclusion, O Pārhta.

Tu, but; *api*, even; *etāni*, these; *karmāṇi*, actions, viz. sacrifice, charity and austerity, which have been spoken of as purifiers; *kartavyāni*, have to be undertaken; *tyaktvā*, by renouncing; *saṅgam*, attachment to them; and by giving up (hankering for) their *phalāni*, results. *Iti*, this; is *me*, My; *niścitam*, firm; and *uttamam*, best; *matam*, conclusion.

Having promised, 'hear from Me the firm conclusion regarding that (*tyāga*)' (4) and also adduced the reason that they are purifiers, the utterance, 'Even these actions have to be performed. This is the firm and best conclusion', is only by way of concluding the promised subject-matter; this sentence does not introduce a fresh topic. For it stands to reason that the phrase 'even these' refers to some immediate topic under discussion. The implication of the word *api* (even) is: 'Even these acts, which are causes of bondage to one who has attachment and who hankers after their results, have to be undertaken by a seeker of Liberation.' But the phrase 'even these' is not used in relation to other acts.

Others explain (thus): Since the *nityakarmas* have no results, therefore (in their case) it is illogical to say, 'by giving up attachment and (hankering for their) results'. The meaning of the phrase *etāni api* (even these) is that, 'even these rites and duties, which are undertaken for desired results and are different from the *nityakarmas*, have to be undertaken. What to speak of the *nityakarmas* like sacrifice, charity and austerity!'

(*Reply*:) This is wrong, since it has been established by the text, 'sacrifice, charity and austerity are verily the purifiers,' that even the *nityakarmas* have results. For a seeker of Liberation who wants to give up

even the *nityakarmas* from fear of their being causes of bondage, how can there be any association with actions done for desired results? Moreover, the phrase *etāni api* cannot apply to actions done for desired results (*kāmyakarmas*), since they have been denigrated in, '...indeed, actions is quite inferior' (2.49), and in, '...by actions other than that action meant for God' (3.9), and since, on the strength of the texts (199), 'the Vedas have the three qualities as their object' (2.45), 'Those who are versed in the Vedas, who are drinkers of Soma, ... (pray for the heavenly goal by worshipping) Me' (9.20), and 'they enter into the human world on the exhaustion of their merit' (9.21), it has been definitely stated that actions done for desired results are causes of bondage; and also because they are far removed from the context.

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः॥७॥

7. The abandoning of daily obligatory acts (*nityakamas*) is not justifiable. Giving up that through delusion is declared to be based on *tamas*.

Therefore, *sannyāsaḥ*, the abandoning; *niyatasya tu karmaṇaḥ*, of the daily obligatory acts, by the seeker of Liberation who is as yet unenlightened and is fit for rites and duties; *na upapadyate*, is not justifiable, because what is desired is the purification of unenlightened persons. *Parityāgaḥ*, giving up; *tasya*, of that, of the daily obligatory duty; *mohāt*, through delusion, through ignorance; *parikīrtitaḥ*, is declared; to be *tāmasaḥ*, based on *tamas*.

Niyata is that duty which must be performed. That an act is *niyata* (obligatory) and it is relinquished is contradictory. Therefore the giving up of that through delusion is declared to be based on *tamas*, for delusion is *tamas*.

Besides,

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्त्यजेत्।
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत्॥८॥

8. Whatever action one may relinquish merely as being painful, from fear of physical suffering, he, having resorted to renunciation based on *rajas*, will surely not acquire the fruits of renunciation.

Yat, whatever; *karma*, action; *tyajet*, one may relinquish, *eva*, merely; *iti*, as being; *duḥkham*, painful; (200) *kāya-kleśa- bhayāt*, from fear of physical suffering, out of fear of bodily pain; *saḥ*, he; *kṛtvā*, having resorted; *tyāgam*, to renunciation; *rājasam*, based on *rajas*, arising from *rajas*; will *eva*, surely; *na labhet* (should rather be *labhate*), not acquire; *tyāga-phalam*, fruits of renunciation, the result called Liberation, which follows from renunciation of all actions as a consequence of Illumination.

Which, again, is the renunciation based on *sattva*?

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः॥९॥

9. Whatever obligatory duty is performed just because it is a bounden duty, O Arjuna, by giving up attachment and the result as well,—that renunciation is considered to be based on *sattva*.

Yat, whatever; *niyatam karma*, daily obligatory duty; *kriyate*, is performed, accomplished; *iti eva*, just because; it is *kāryam*, a bounden duty; O Arjuna, *tyaktvā*, by giving up; *saṅgam*, attachment; and *phalam*, the result; *ca eva*, as well; *saḥ*, that; *tyāgaḥ*, renunciation, giving up of attachment and (hankering for) the results of daily obligatory duties; *mataḥ*, is considered; to be *sāttvikaḥ*, based on *sattva*, arising from *sattva*.

We said that the Lord's utterance is proof of the fruitfulness of daily obligatory duties. Or, even if the *nityakarmas* be understood (from the Lord's words) to be fruitless, still the ignorant man does certainly imagine that the *nityakarmas* (daily obligatory duties) when performed produce for oneself a result either in the form of purification of the mind or avoidance of evil. As to this, the Lord aborts even that imagination by saying, 'by giving up the result'. Hence it has been well said, 'by giving up attachment and the result'.

Objection: Well, is not the threefold relinquishment of *actions*, also called *sannyāsa*, under discussion? As regards this, the renunciation based

on *tamas* and *rajas* have been stated. Why is the relinquishment of *attachment* and (desire for their) *results* spoken of here as the third? This is like somebody saying, 'Three Brāhmaṇas have come. Of them two are versed in the six auxiliaries (201) of the Vedas; the third is a Kṣatriya!'

Reply: This is not wrong, for this is meant as a eulogy on the basis of the common factor of renunciation. Between renunciation of *actions* and renunciation of *hankering for results*, there is, indeed, the similarity of the fact of renunciation. While on this subject, by condemning 'renunciation of actions' on account of its being based on *rajas* and *tamas*, the 'renunciation of desire for results of actions' is being praised on account of its being based on *sattva*, by saying, 'that renunciation is considered to be based on *sattva*.'

The internal organ of a person who is qualified for rites and duties, who performs the *nityakarmas* by giving up attachment and hankering for results, becomes pure on account of its being untainted by attachment to results etc. and refined by the *nityakarmas*. When it is pure and tranquil, it becomes capable of contemplating on the Self. Since, for that very person whose internal organ has become purified by performing the *nityakarmas* and who has become ready for the knowledge of the Self, the process by which he can become steadfast in it has to be stated, therefore the Lord says:

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः॥१०॥

10. The man of renunciation who has become imbued with *sattva*, who is wise and freed from doubts, does not hate unbefitting action, nor does he become attached to befitting activity.

Na dveṣṭi, he does not hate; *akuśalam*, unbefitting; *karma*, action, rites and duties meant for desired results—with the idea, 'What is the usefulness of this which is a cause of transmigration through fresh embodiment?' *Na anuṣajjate*, he does not become attached to; *kuśale*, befitting activity, daily obligatory duties, by thinking that this is the cause of Liberation by virtue of its being the cause of purification of the mind, rise of Knowledge and

steadfastness in it. That is to say, he does not entertain any liking even for it, because he finds no purpose in it.

Who, again, is he? *Tyāgī*, the man of renunciation, who has become so by having given up attachment and rewards of action in the manner stated above. He is a *tyāgī* who performs *nityakarmas* by relinquishing attachment to those acts and (their) results.

Again, it is being stated as to when that person does not hate an unbefitting act and does not become attached to a befitting activity: When he has become *sattva-samāviṣṭaḥ*, imbued with *sattva*, that is, when he is filled with, possessed of, *sattva*, which is the means to the knowledge that discriminates between the Self and the not-Self; and hence *medhāvī*, wise—endowed with intelligence (*medhā*), intuitive experience, characterized as knowledge of the Self; one possessed of that is *medhāvī* (wise)—; and owing to the very fact of being wise, *chinnasaṁśayaḥ*, freed from doubts—one whose doubts created by ignorance have been sundered, one who is freed from doubts by his firm conviction that nothing but abiding in the true nature of the Self is the supreme means to the highest Good.

The person competent (for rites and duties) who, having gradually become purified in mind through the practice of Karma-yoga in the way described above, has realized as his own Self the actionless Self, which is devoid of modifications like birth etc., he, '...having given up all actions mentally, remaining without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all' (cf. 5.13), attains steadfastness in Knowledge, which is characterized as 'actionlessness'. In this way, the purpose of the aforesaid Karma-yoga has been stated through the present verse.

On the other hand, since, for the unenlightened person—who, while being qualified (for rites and duties), holds on to the body owing to the erroneous conception that the body is the Self, and who has the firm conviction, 'I am the agent,' because of the persistence of his idea that the Self is the agent—it is not possible to renounce actions totally, therefore he has competence only for performing enjoined duties by giving up fruits of actions. But he is not to renounce them (actions). In order to point out this idea the Lord says:

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते॥११॥

11. Since it is not possible for one who holds on to a body to give up actions entirely, therefore he, on the other hand, who renounces results of actions is called a man of renunciation.

Deha-bhṛtā, for one who holds on to a body—one who maintains (*bibharti*) a body (*deha*) is called a *deha-bhṛt*. One who has self-identification with the body is called a *deha-bhṛt*, but not so a man of discrimination; for he has been excluded from the eligibility for agentship by such texts as, 'He who knows this One is indestructible...' etc. Hence, for that unenlightened person who holds on to the body, *hi*, since; it is *na*, not; *śakyam*, possible; *tyaktum*, to give up, renounce; *karmāṇi*, actions; *aśeṣataḥ*, entirely, totally; therefore the ignorant person who is competent (for rites and duties), *yaḥ*, who; *tu*, on the other hand; *karma-phala-tyāgī*, renounces results of actions, relinquishes only the hankering for the results of actions while performing the *nityakarmas*; *saḥ*, he; is *abhidhīyate*, called; *tyāgī iti*, a man of renunciation—even though he continues to be a man of rites and duties. This is said by way of eulogy.

Therefore total renunciation of actions is possible only for one who has realized the supreme Truth, who does not hold on to the body, and who is devoid of the idea that the body is the Self.

Again, what is that purpose which is accomplished through renunciation of all actions? This is being stated:

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम्।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित्॥१२॥

12. The threefold results of actions—the undesirable, the desirable, and the mixed—accrues after death to those who do not resort to renunciation, but never to those who resort to monasticism.

These *trividham*, threefold—of three kinds; *phalam*, results; *karmaṇaḥ*, of actions characterized as the righteous and the unrighteous; *aniṣṭam*, the undesirable, consisting in (birth in) hell, (among) animals, etc.; *iṣṭam*, the desirable, consisting in (birth as) gods and others; and *miśram*, the mixed,

having a mixture of the desirable and the undesirable, consisting in (birth as) human beings;—these results that are of these kinds, *bhavati*, accrues; *pretya*, after death, after the fall of the body; *atyāginām*, to those who do not resort to renunciation, to the unillumined, the men with rites and duties, who are not men of renunciation in the truest sense.

The derivative sense of the word *phala* (*pha-la*) is this: On account of being accomplished through the operation of diverse external accessories, and a result of ignorance, comparable to the charm cast by jugglery, a source of great delusion and appearing as though close to the indwelling Self, it is *pha*lgu (unsubstantial), and as a consequence it undergoes *la*yam (disappearance).

(The result that is of this kind accrues to those who do not resort to renunciation). *Tu*, but; *na kvacit*, never; *sannyāsinām*, to those who resort to monasticism for the sake of the highest Reality, to the class of monks called *paramahaṁsas* who remain steadfast in Knowledge alone. For, it cannot be that those who are devoted wholly to steadfastness in complete enlightenment do not dig out the seed of transmigration. This is the meaning.

Therefore it is only for those who have realized the supreme Truth that it is possible to become a monk who renounces actions totally, because action, accessories and results are superimpositions on the Self through ignorance. But the renunciation of all actions is not possible for an unenlightened person who perceives the locus (the body etc.), action, agentship and accessories as the Self. This the Lord shows in the following verses:

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम्॥१३॥

13. O mighty-armed one, learn from Me these (202) five factors for the accomplishment of all actions, which have been spoken of in the Vedānta in which actions terminate.

O mighty-armed one, *nibodha*, learn; *me*, from Me; *imāni*, these; *pañca*, five; *kāraṇāni*, factors, accessories, which are going to be stated—for drawing the attention of his (Arjuna's) mind and for showing the difference

among these categories (203), the Lord praises those accessories in the succeeding verses as fit for being known—; *siddhaye*, for the accomplishment; *sarva-karmaṇām*, of all actions; *proktāni*, which have been spoken of; *sāṅkhye*, in Vedānta—*sāṅkhya* is that scripture where the subject-matters (204) to be known are fully (*samyak*) stated (*khyāyante*)—; *kṛtānte*, in which actions terminate. *Kṛtānte* qualifies that very word (*Vedānta*).

Kṛtam mean action. That in which occurs the culmination (*anta*) of that *kṛtam* is *kṛtāntam*, that is the termination of actions. In the texts, '...as much utility as a man has in a well' (2.46), and 'O son of Pṛthā, all actions in their totality culminate in Knowledge' (4.33), the Lord shows the cessation of all actions when the knowledge of the Self dawns. Hence (it is said): '...which have been spoken of in that Vedānta where actions culminate and which is meant for the knowledge of the Self.'

Which are they? This is being answered:

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम्।
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम्॥१४॥

14. The locus as also the agent, the different kinds of organs, the many and distinct activities, and, the divine is here the fifth.

Adhiṣṭhānam, the locus, the body, which is the seat, the basis, of the manifestation of desire, hatred, happiness, sorrow, knowledge, etc.; *tathā*, as also *kartā*, the agent, the enjoyer (205) who has assumed the characteristics of the limiting adjuncts; *pṛthak vidham*, the different kinds of; *karaṇam*, organs, the ears etc. which, twelve (206) in number, are of different kinds for the experience of sound etc.; the *vividhāḥ*, many; and *pṛthak*, distinct; *ceṣṭā*, activities connected with air—exhalation, inhalation, etc.; *ca eva*, and; *daivam*, the divine, that is the Sun and the others who are the presiding deities of the eye etc.; is *atra*, here, in relation to these four; *pañcamam*, the fifth—completing the five.

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः।
न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः॥१५॥

15. Whatever action a man performs with the body, speech and mind, be it just or its reverse, of it these five are the causes.

Yat, whatever; *karma*, action; *naraḥ*, a man; *prārabhate*, performs; with these three—*śarīra-vāṅ-mano-bhiḥ*, with the body, speech and mind; be it *nyāyyam*, just, righteous, conforming to the scriptures; *vā*, or; *viparītam*, its reverse, not conforming to the scriptures, unrighteous; and even such activities like closing the eyes etc. which are consequent on the fact of living (that is instinctive acts)—they also are certainly the result of righteous and unrighteous acts done in earlier lives, and hence they are understood by the very use of the words 'just and its reverse'—; *tasya*, of it, of all activities without exception; *ete*, these; *pañca*, five, as mentioned; are the *hetavaḥ*, causes.

Objection: Well, are not the locus etc. the cause of all actions? Why is it said, '...performs with the body, speech and mind'?

Reply: This fault does not arise. All actions described as 'enjoined' or 'prohibited' are mainly based on the three, body etc. Seeing, hearing, etc., which are characteristics of life and are subsidiaries to these (body etc.) (207), are divided into three groups and spoken of in, 'performs with the body,' etc. Even at the time of reaping the fruits (of actions), they are experienced mainly through these (three). Hence, there is no contradiction with the assertion that the five are the causes.

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः॥१६॥

16. This being the case, anyone who, owing to the imperfection of his intellect, perceives the absolute Self as the agent, that man does not perceive (properly), and has a perverted intellect.

Tatra is used for connecting with the topic under discussion. *Tatra evam sati*, this being the case, when actions are thus accomplished by the five causes mentioned above;—this portion has to be connected with 'perverted intellect' by way of causality (208)—*yaḥ tu*, anyone, an unenlightened person, who; *paśyati*, perceives; *kevalam*, the absolute, pure; *ātmānam*, Self; as the *kartāram*, agent—thinking, 'I myself am the agent of the actions being done by them', as a consequence of imagining the Self as

identified with them; why?—*akṛta-buddhitvāt*, owing to the imperfection of his intellect, owing to his intellect not having been refined by the instructions of Vedānta and the teachers, and by reasoning—.

Even the person who, believing in the Self as distinct from the body etc., looks upon the distinct (209), absolute Self as the agent, he, too, is surely of imperfect intellect.

Hence, owing to his having an imperfect intellect, *saḥ*, that man; *na*, does not; *paśyati*, perceive (properly) either the truth about the Self or about actions. This is the meaning. Therefore he is a *durmatiḥ*, man of perverted intellect, in the sense that his intellect is contemptible, perverse, corrupted, and the cause of repeatedly undergoing births and deaths. He does not perceive even while seeing—like the man suffering from Timira seeing many moons, or like one thinking the moon to be moving when (actually) the clouds are moving, or like the one seated on some conveyance (e.g. palanquin), thinking oneself to be moving when others (the bearers) are moving.

Who, again, is the man of right intellect who perceives correctly? This is being answered:

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते।
हत्वाऽपि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते॥१७॥

17. He who has not the feeling of egoism, whose intellect is not tainted, he does not kill, nor does he become bound—even by killing these creatures!

Yasya, he who, the person whose intellect is refined by the instructions of the scriptures and the teachers, and reason; who has *na*, not; *ahankṛtaḥ bhāvaḥ*, the feeling of egoism, in whom does not occur the notion in the form, 'I am the agent'; that is, he who sees thus: 'These five, viz. locus etc. (14), imagined in the Self through ignorance, are verily the agents of all actions; not I. But I am the absolute, unchanging witness of their functions, "Without vital force, without mind, pure, superior to the (other) superior immutable (Māyā)" (Mu. 2.1.1)'; *yasya*, whose; *buddhiḥ*, intellect, the internal organ, which is the limiting adjunct of the Self; is *na*, not; *lipyate*, tainted, does not become regretful thinking, 'I have done this; as a result, I

shall enter into hell'; whose intellect does not become thus tainted, he has a good intellect and he perceives (rightly). *Api*, even; *hatvā*, by killing; *imān*, these; *lokān*, creatures, that is all living beings; *saḥ* he; does not *hanti*, kill —he does not perform the act of killing; nor does he *nibadhyate*, become bound, nor even does he become connected with its result, the fruit of an unrighteous action.

Objection: Even if this be a eulogy, is it not contradictory to say, 'even by killing he does not kill'?

Reply: This defect does not arise; for this becomes logical from the ordinary and the enlightened points of view. By adopting the empirical point of view (which consists in thinking), 'I am the slayer', by identifying the body with the Self, the Lord says, 'even by killing'; and, by taking His stand on the supreme Truth as explained above (the Lord says), 'he does not kill, nor does he become bound'. Thus both these surely become reasonable.

Objection: Is it not that the Self certainly does act in *combination* with the locus etc., which conclusion follows from the use of the word *kevala* (absolute) in the text, 'the absolute Self as the agent' (16)?

Reply: There is not such fault, because, the Self being changeless by nature, there is no possibility of Its becoming united with the locus etc. For it is only a changeful entity that can possibly be united with another, or come to have agentship through combination. But, for the changeless Self there can be no combination with anything whatsoever. Hence, agentship through combination is not logical. Therefore, the absoluteness of the Self being natural, the word *kevalam* is merely a reiteration of an established fact.

And the changelessness of the Self is well known from the Upaniṣads, the Smṛtis and logic. As to that, in the *Gītā* itself this has been established more than once in such texts as, 'It is said that ... This is unchangeable' (2.25), 'Actions are being done by the *guṇas* themselves' (see 3.27), 'this ...supreme Self does not act ... although existing in the body' (13.31), and in the Upaniṣads also in such texts as, 'It thinks, as it were, and shakes, as it were' (Bṛ. 4.3.7).

And from the standpoint of reason also, the royal path is to hold that the true nature of the Self is that It is partless, independent of others and changeless. Even if mutability (of the Self) be accepted, It should have a change that is Its own. The functions of the locus etc. cannot be attributed to the agency of the Self. Indeed, an action done by someone else cannot be imputed to another by whom it has not been done! As for what is imputed (on somebody) through ignorance, that is not his. As the quality of silver is not of nacre, or as surface or dirt attributed through ignorance to the sky by foolish people is not of the sky, similarly, the changes in the locus etc. also are verily their own, and not of the Self. Hence it has been well said that the enlightened person 'does not kill, nor is he bound', because of the absence of his being tainted by the idea that actions are done by himself. (210)

After having declared, 'This One does not kill, nor is It killed' (2.19); having stated the immutability of the Self through such texts as, 'Never is this One born' (2.20) , etc., which adduce the reason for this; having briefly stated at the commencement of the Scripture—in, 'he who knows this One as indestructible' (2.21)—that the enlightened man has no eligibility for rites and duties; and having deliberated in various places on that (cessation) which has been mooted in the middle (of the Scripture), the Lord, by way of summarizing the purport of the Scripture, concludes here by saying that the enlightened person 'does not kill, nor does he become bound.' If this be so, then it becomes established that the three kinds of results of actions, viz. the undesirable etc., do not accrue to the monks, since it is reasonable that, because of the illogicality of their entertaining the idea of being embodied, all actions resulting from ignorance become abandoned (by them). And hence, as a consequence of a reversal of this, it becomes inevitable that the results do accrue to others.

Thus, this is how the purport of the scripture *Gītā* has been summed up. In order that this which is the essence of the teachings of all the Vedas should be understood after deliberation by the learned ones possessing a sharp intellect, it has been explained by us in accordance with the scriptures and reasoning, in various places by dealing with it topically.

Thereafter, now is being stated what prompts actions:

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना।

करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः॥१८॥

18. Knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower—this is the threefold inducement to action. The comprehension of actions comes under three heads—the instrument, the object and the subject.

Jñānam, knowledge (—being derived in the sense of 'that through which something is known', *jñāna* means knowledge concerning all things in general—): so also *jñeyam*, the object of knowledge (—that also is a reference to all objects in general—); similarly, *parijñātā*, the knower, the experiencer, a product of ignorance, who partakes of the nature of the limiting adjuncts;—thus, this tripartite group formed by these is the *trividhā*, threefold; *karma-codanā*, inducement to action, inducer of all actions in general. For, it is when the three, viz. knowledge etc., combine that commencement of all actions meant either for acceptance or rejection (211) are possible. After that, what are initiated by the five, viz. locus etc., and are grouped in three ways according to the differences of their being based on speech, mind and body become comprehended under the three, viz. instrument etc. This is what is being stated: *Karma-saṅgrahaḥ*, the comprehension (212) of actions; *iti*, comes under; *trividhaḥ*, three heads, three classes; viz. *karaṇam*, the instrument (—derived in the sense of that through which anything is done—), that is the external (organs) (ear etc.) and the internal (organs) (intellect etc.); *karma*, the object (—derivatively meaning that which is most cherished by the subject and is achieved through an act—); and *kartā*, the subject (agent), who employs the instrument etc., who partakes of the nature of the limiting adjuncts.

Saṅgrahaḥ is derived thus: that in which something is comprehended. The comprehension of action (*karma*) is *karma-saṅgrahaḥ*. Indeed, action becomes included in these three. Hence is this 'threefold comprehension of action'.

Now then, since action, instrument and result are all constituted by the *guṇas*, it becomes necessary to state the three fold variety in them based on the differences among the *guṇas*, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Hence it is begun:

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः।

प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि॥१९॥

19. Knowledge, action and agent are stated in the teaching about the *guṇas* to be only of three kinds according to the differences of the *guṇas*. Hear about them also as they are.

Jñānam, knowledge; *karma*, action—not the objective case in the technical sense, which is defined as 'that which is most cherished by the subject'; and *kartā*, agent, the accomplisher of actions; *procyate*, are stated; *guṇa-saṅkhyāne*, in the teaching about the *guṇas*, in the philosophy of Kapila; to be *eva*, only (—*only* is used for emphasis, by way of showing that they have no classification other than that based on the *guṇas*—); *tridhā*, of three kinds; *guṇa-bhedataḥ*, according to the differences of the *guṇas*, that is according to the differences of *sattva* etc.

Even that philosophy teaching about the *guṇas* is certainly valid so far as it concerns the experiencer of the *guṇas*, though it is contradictory so far as the non-duality of the supreme Reality, Brahman, is concerned. Those followers of Kapila are acknowledged authorities in the ascertainment of the functions of the *guṇas* and their derivatives. Hence, that scripture, too, is being referred to by way of eulogy of the subject-matter going to be spoken of. Therefore there is no contradiction.

Śṛṇu, hear; *tāni*, about them; *api*, also; *yathāvat*, as they are, as established by reason and as propounded in the scriptures. Hear about knowledge etc. and all their diversities created by the differences of the *guṇas*. The idea is, 'Concentrate your mind on the subject going to be taught.'

And now the threefold classification of knowledge is being stated:

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम्॥२०॥

20. Know that knowledge to be originating from *sattva* through which one sees a single, undecaying, undivided Entity in all the diversified things.

Viddhi, know; *tat*, that; *jñānam*, knowledge, realization of the Self as non-dual, complete realization; to be *sāttvikam*, originating from *sattva*; *yena*, through which knowledge; *īkṣate*, one sees; *ekam*, a single; *avyayam*,

undecaying—that which does not undergo mutation either in itself or by the mutation of its qualities—' that is eternal and immutable; *bhāvam*, Entity—the word *bhāva* is used to imply an entity—, that is the single Reality which is the Self; *sarvabhūteṣu*, in all things, in all things beginning from the Unmanifest to the unmoving things; and through which knowledge one sees that Entity to be *avibhaktam*, undivided; in every body, *vibhakteṣu*, in all the diversified things, in the different bodies. The idea is: that Reality which is the Self remains, like Space, undivided.

Being based on *rajas* and *tamas*, those that are the dualistic philosophies are incomplete, and hence are not by themselves adequate for the eradication of worldly existence.

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान्।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम्॥२१॥

21. But know that knowledge to be originating from *rajas* which, amidst all things, apprehends the different entities of various kinds as distinct. (213)

Tu, but; *viddhi*, know; *tat*, that; *jñānam*, knowledge; to be *rājasam*, originating from *rajas*; *yat*, which; *sarveṣu bhūteṣu*, amidst all things; *vetti*, apprehends—since knowledge cannot be an agent of action, therefore the meaning implied is, 'that, knowledge ... through which one apprehends...'—; *nānā-bhāvān*, the different entities; *pṛthagvidhān*, of various kinds, that is, those possessing diverse characteristics and different from oneself; *pṛthaktvena*, as distinct, as separate in each body.

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम्।
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥२२॥

22. But that (knowledge) is said to be born of *tamas* which is confined to one form as though it were all, which is irrational, not concerned with truth and trivial.

But *tat*, that knowledge; is *udāhṛtam*, said to be; *tāmasam*, born of *tamas*; *yat*, which is; *saktam*, confined; *ekasmin*, to one; *kārye*, form, to one body or to an external image etc., *kṛtsnavat*, as though it were all, as though it comprehended everything, thinking, 'The Self, or God, is only this much; there is nothing beyond it,'—as the naked Jainas hold that the soul

conforms to and has the size of the body, or (as others hold) that God is merely a stone or wood—, remaining confined thus to one form; *ahaitukam*, which is irrational, bereft of logic; *a-tattvārthavat*, not concerned with truth —*tattvārtha*, truth, means something just as it is; that (knowledge) which has this (truth) as its object of comprehension is *tattvārthavat*; that without this is; *a-tattvārthavat*—; and which, on account of the very fact of its being irrational, is *alpam*, trivial, because it is concerned with trifles or is productive of little result. This kind of knowledge is indeed found in non-discriminating creatures in whom *tamas* predominates.

Now is being stated the threefold division of action:

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम्।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते॥२३॥

23. The daily obligatory action which is performed without attachment and without likes or dislikes by one who does not hanker for rewards, that is said to be born of *sattva*.

Niyatam, the daily obligatory; *karma*, action; *yat*, which; is *kṛtam*, performed; *saṅga-rahitam*, without attachment; *arāga-dveṣataḥ*, without likes or dislikes; *aphala-prepsunā*, by one who does not hanker for rewards, by an agent who is the opposite of one who is desirous of the fruits of action; *tat*, that (action); *ucyate*, is said to be; *sāttvikam*, born of *sattva*.

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम्॥२४॥

24. But that action is said to be born of *rajas* which is done by one desirous of results or by one who is egotistic, and which is highly strenuous.

But *tat*, that; *karma*, action; *udāhṛtam*, is said to be; *rājasam*, born of *rajas*; *yat*, which; is *kriyate*, done; *kāmepsunā* by one desirous of results; *vā*, or; *saahaṅkāreṇa*, by one who is egotistic; and *bahula-āyāsam*, which is highly strenuous, accomplished by the agent with great effort.

'Egotistic' is not used in contrast to knowledge of Truth. What then? It is used in contrast to the absence of egotism in an ordinary person versed in the Vedic path. For in the case of the knower of the Self, who is not

egotistic in the real sense, there is no question of his being desirous of results or of being an agent of actions requiring great effort. Even of actions born of *sattva*, the *agent* is one who has not realized the Self and is possessed of egoism; what to speak of actions born of *rajas* and *tamas*! In common parlance, a person versed in the Vedic path, even though not possessing knowledge of the Self, is spoken of as being free from egotism thus—'This Brāhmaṇa is free from egotism'. Therefore, '*sāhaṅkāreṇa vā*' is said in contrast to him only. *Punaḥ* (again) is used to complete the metre.

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम्।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते॥२५॥

25 That action is said to be born of *tamas* which is undertaken out of delusion, (and) without consideration of its consequence, loss, harm and ability.

Tat, that; *karma*, action; *yat*, which; is *ārabhyate*, undertaken; *mohāt*, out of delusion, non-discrimination; *anapekṣya*, without consideration of; its *anubandham*, consequence, the result which accrues later; *kṣayam*, loss —that loss which is incurred in the form of loss of energy or loss of wealth in the course of any action; *hiṁsām*, harm, suffering to creatures; and *pauruṣam*, ability, prowess—one's own ability felt as, 'I shall be able to complete this task';—without consideration of these, from 'consequence' to 'ability', *ucyate*, is said to be; *tāmasam*, born of *tamas*.

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वित:।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकार: कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते॥२६॥

26. (214) The agent who is free from attachment (215), not egotistic, endowed with fortitude and diligence, and unperturbed by success and failure is said to be possessed of *sattva*.

Kartā, the agent; who is *mukta-saṅgaḥ*, free from attachment—one by whom attachment has been given up; *anahaṁvādī*, not egotistic, not given to asserting his ego; *dhṛti-utsāha-samanvitaḥ*, endowed with fortitude and diligence; and *nirvikāraḥ*, unperturbed; *siddhi-asiddhyoḥ*, by success and failure, in the fruition and non-fruition of any action undertaken—led only by the authority of the scriptures, not by attachment to results etc. (216);—

the agent who is such, he is *ucyate*, said to be; *sāttvikaḥ*, possessed of *sattva*.

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः॥२७॥

27. The agent who has attachment, who is desirous of the results of actions, covetous, cruel by nature, unclean and subject to joy and sorrow is declared to be possessed of *rajas*.

Kartā, the agent; *rāgī*, who has attachment; *karma-phala-prepsuḥ*, who is desirous of the results of actions; *lubdhaḥ*, covetous, greedy for other's property, and does not part with his own (when) at holy places; *himsātmakaḥ*, cruel by nature, having a nature that causes pain to others; *aśuciḥ*, unclean, devoid of internal and external cleanliness; and *harṣa-śoka-anvitaḥ*, subject to joy and sorrow, affected by these two, joy and sorrow—joy at the acquisition of desired objects, sorrow at getting undesired objects and losing coveted objects; and elation and dejection may occur to that very person from his actions being aided or hindered; one who is subject to those—; *parikīrtitaḥ*, is declared to be; *rājasaḥ*, possessed of *rajas*.

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते॥२८॥

28. The agent who is unsteady, naive, unbending, deceitful, wicked, [217] lazy, morose and procrastinating is said to be possessed of *tamas*.

The agent who is *ayuktaḥ*, unsteady; *prākṛtaḥ*, naive, of very unrefined intelligence, like a child; *stabdhaḥ*, unbending like a staff—he does not bend down to anyone; *śaṭhaḥ*, deceitful, cunning, hiding his own powers; *naiṣkṛtikaḥ*, wicked, given to destroying the livelihood of others; *alasaḥ*, lazy, not inclined even to his own duties; *viṣādī*, morose, ever in a mood of dejection; and *dīrghasūtrī*, procrastinating, postponing duties for long, [218] not accomplishing even in a month what is to be done today or tomorrow; —one who is such, he *ucyate*, is said to be; *tāmasaḥ*, possessed of *tamas*.

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु।

प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय॥२९॥

29. O Dhanañjaya, listen to the classification of the intellect as also of fortitude, which is threefold according to the *guṇas*, while it is being stated elaborately and severally.

O Dhanañjaya, *śṛṇu*, listen; *bhedam*, to the classification; *buddheḥ*, of the intellect; *ca eva*, as also; the classification *dhṛteḥ*, of fortitude; *trividham*, which is threefold; *guṇataḥ*, according to the *guṇas*, *sattva* etc.—this much is an aphoristic statement—; *procyamānam*, while it is being stated; *aśeṣeṇa*, elaborately, just as it is, without omitting anything; and *pṛthaktvena*, severally.

Arjuna is called Dhanañjaya because, in the course of his expedition to conquer all the quarters, he won immense human and divine wealth (*dhana*).

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥३०॥

30. O Pārtha, that intellect is born of *sattva* which understands action and withdrawal, duty and what is not duty, the sources of fear and fearlessness, and bondage and freedom.

O Pārtha, *sā*, that; *buddhiḥ*, intellect; is *sāttvikī*, born of *sattva*; *yā*, which; *vetti*, understands; *pravṛttim*, action, the path of rites and duties, which is the cause of bondage; and *nivṛttim*, withdrawal, the path of renunciation, which is the cause of Liberation—since action and withdrawal are mentioned in the same sentence along with bondage and freedom, therefore they mean 'the path of rites and duties and of renunciation'—; *kārya-akārye*, duty and what is not duty, that is what is enjoined or prohibited, (219) what ought to be done or ought not to be done, action and inaction. With regard to what? With regard to action leading to seen or unseen results, undertaken according to place, time, etc. *Bhaya-abhaye*, the sources of fear and fearlessness, that is the causes of fear and fearlessness, with regard to seen or unseen objects; *bandham*, bondage, along with its cause; and *mokṣam*, freedom, along with its cause.

In this context, knowing is a function of the intellect; but the intellect is the possessor of the function. Fortitude also is only a particular function of the intellect.

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च।
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी॥३१॥

31. O Pārtha, that intellect is born of *rajas* with which one wrongly understands virtue and vice as also what ought to be done and ought not to be done.

O Pārtha, *sā*, that; *buddhiḥ*, intellect; is *rājasī*, born of *rajas*; *yayā*, with which; *prajānāti*, one understands; *ayathāvat*, wrongly, not truly, not by discerning it from all points of view; *dharmam*, virtue, as prescribed by the scriptures; and *adharmam*, vice, what is prohibited by them; (220) *ca eva*, as also; *kāryam*, what ought to be done; and *akāryam*, what ought not to be done—those very 'duty' and 'what is not duty' as stated earlier.

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी॥३२॥

32. O Pārtha, that intellect is born of *tamas* which, being covered by darkness, considers vice as virtue, and verily perceives all things contrary to what they are.

O Pārtha, *sā*, that; *buddhiḥ*, intellect; *tāmasī*, is born of *tamas*; *yā*, which; *tamasāvṛtā*, being covered by darkness; *manyate*, considers, understands; *adharmam*, vice, what is prohibited; *iti*, as; *dharmam*, virtue, what is prescribed; and *ca*, verily; perceives *sarva-arthān*, all things, all objects of knowledge without exception; *viparītān*, contrary to what they are.

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥३३॥

33. O Pārtha, the firmness that is unfailing through concentration, with which one restrains the functions of the mind, vital forces and the organs, that firmness is born of *sattva*.

O Pārtha, *dhṛtyā*, the firmness; (—is connected with the remote word) *avyabhicāriṇyā*, that is unfailing; *yogena*, through concentration, that is (the firmness that is) ever associated with *samādhi* (absorption in Brahman); *yayā*, with which; *dhārayate*, one restrains;—what?—*manaḥ-prāṇa-indriya-kriyāḥ*, the functions of the mind, vital forces and organs—restrains them from tending towards the path opposed to the scriptures—. Indeed, when restrained with firmness, they do not incline towards objects prohibited by the scriptures. *Sā*, that; *dhṛtiḥ*, firmness, which is of this kind; is *sāttvikī*, born of *sattva*.

What is meant is that when one restrains the functions of the mind, vital forces and organs with unfailing firmness, one does so through yoga, concentration.

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकांक्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी॥३४॥

34. But, O Pārtha, the firmness with which one holds on to righteousness, covetable things and wealth, being desirous of their fruits as the occasion for each arises, that firmness is born of rajas.

Tu, but, O Pārtha; the *dhṛtyā*, firmness; *yayā*, with which; a person *dhārayate*, holds on to; *dharma-kāma-arthān*, righteousness, covetable things and wealth—entertains the conviction in the mind that these ought to be pursued always; and becomes *phala-ākānkṣī*, desirous of their fruits; *prasaṅgena*, as the occasion for each arises, according as the situation arises for holding on to any one of dharma etc.; *sā*, that; *dhṛtiḥ*, firmness; is *rājasī*, born of *rajas*.

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा तामसी मता॥३५॥

35. That firmness is considered (221) to be born of *tamas* due to which a person with a corrupt intellect does not give up sleep, fear, sorrow, despondency as also sensuality.

That firmness is *matā*, considered to be; *tāmasī*, born of *tamas*; *yayā*, due to which; *durmedhā*, a person with a corrupt intellect; *na vimuñcati*, does not give up—indeed, holds fast to; *svapnam*, sleep; *bhayam*, fear;

śokam, sorrow; *viṣādam*, despondency; *eva ca*, as also; *madam*, sensuality, enjoyment of objects—mentally holding these as things that must always be resorted to, considering them to be greatly important to himself, like a drunkard thinking of wine.

The threefold division of action as also of agents according to the differences of the *guṇas* has been stated. After that, now is being stated the threefold division of results and happiness:

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति॥३६॥

36. Now hear from Me, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, as regards the three kinds of joy: That in which one delights owing to habit, and certainly attains the cessation of sorrows; (222)

Idānīm, now; *śṛṇu*, hear; *me*, from Me, i.e. be attentive to what I say; *tu*, as regards; the *trividham*, three kinds of; *sukham*, joy, O scion of the Bharata dynasty. *Yatra*, that in which; *ramate*, one delights, derives pleasure; *abhyāsāt*, owing to habit, due to frequent repetition; and in the experience of which joy one *nigacchati*, certainly attains; *duḥkhāntam*, the cessation of sorrow—.

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम्।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम्॥३७॥

37. That which is like poison in the beginning, but comparable to nectar in the end, and which arises from the purity of one's intellect—that joy is spoken of as born of *sattva*.

Yat, that joy which is; *iva*, like; *viṣam*, poison, a source of pain; *agre*, in the beginning—when it first comes in the early stages of (acquisition) of knowledge, detachment, meditation and absorption, since they involve great struggle; but *amṛtopamam*, comparable to nectar; *pariṇāme*, in the end, when it arises from the maturity of knowledge, detachment, etc.; and which *ātma-buddhi-prasādajam*, arises from the purity (*prasāda*), transparence like water, of one's intellect (*ātma-buddhi*); *tat*, that; *sukham*, joy; is *proktam*, spoken of, by the learned ones; as *sāttvikam*, born of *sattva*. Or, the phrase *ātma-buddhi-prasādajam* may mean 'arising from the high

degree of clearness of that *ātma-buddhi* (knowledge of or connected with the Self)'; therefore it is born of *sattva*.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम्।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम्॥३८॥

38. That joy is referred to as born of *rajas* which, arising from the contact of the organs and (their) objects, is like nectar in the beginning, but like poison at the end.

Tat, that; *sukham*, joy; is *smṛtam*, referred to; as *rājasam*, born of *rajas*; *yat*, which; *viṣaya-indriya-saṁyogāt*, arising from the contact of the organs and (their) objects; is *amṛtopamam*, like nectar; *agre*, in the beginning, in the initial moments; but *iva*, like; *viṣam*, poison; *pariṇāme*, at the end—at the end of full enjoyment of the objects (of the senses), because it causes loss of strength, vigour, beauty, wisdom, (223) retentive faculty, wealth and diligence, and because it is the cause of vice and its consequent hell etc.

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥३९॥

39. That joy is said to be born of *tamas* which, both in the beginning and in the sequel, is delusive to oneself and arises from sleep, laziness and inadvertence.

That joy is *udāhṛtam*, said to be; *tāmasam*, born of *tamas*; *yat*, which; both *agre*, in the beginning; *ca*, and; *anubandhe*, in the sequel, after the end (of enjoyment); is *mohanam*, delusive; *ātmanaḥ*, to oneself; and *nidrā-ālasya-pramāda-uttham*, arises from sleep, laziness and inadvertence.

Therefore, now is begun a verse in order to conclude this section (224);

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः॥४०॥

40. There is no such entity in the world or, again, among the gods in heaven, which can be free from these three *guṇas* born of Nature.

Na asti, there is no; *tat*, such; *sattvam*, entity, living creatures like men and others, or non-living things; *pṛthivyām*, in the world; *vā punaḥ*, or,

again; an entity *deveṣu*, among the gods; *divi*, in heaven; *yat*, which; *syāt*, can be [—this is connected with the preceding portion '*na tat*, there is no such (entity)'—]; *muktam*, free; *ebhiḥ*, from these; *tribhiḥ*, three; *guṇaiḥ*, *guṇas*, *sattva* etc.; *prakṛti-jaiḥ*, born of Nature.

It has been said that the entire transmigratory state together with its roots, characterized by action, agent and results—consisting of the *guṇas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*—, and projected by ignorance, is an evil. And this also has been said through the imagery of the Tree in the verse, '...which has its roots upward' etc. (15.1). It has been further said that, 'after felling that (Tree), with the strong sword of detachment, thereafter, that State has to be sought for' (15.3-4). And, as to that, since all things consist of the three *guṇas*, there arises the impossibility of the eradication of the cause of worldly existence. Hence, it has to be shown how it can be eradicated. Besides, the purport of the scripture *Gītā* has to be summed up, and it has also to be shown that the import of all the Vedas and the Smṛtis, which must be put into practice by those who long for the Goal of human life, is verily this much. Hence begin the verses, 'The duties of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas ...', etc.

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परन्तप।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः॥४१॥

41. O scorcher of enemies, the duties of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas, as also of the Śūdras have been fully classified according to the *guṇas* born from Nature.

Parantapa, O scorcher of enemies; *karmāṇi*, the duties; *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśām*, of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas; *ca*, as also; *śūdrāṇām*, of the Śūdras—the Śūdras have not been included with the others (in the compound word) because, owing to their having a single birth, (225) they have no right to (the study of) the Vedas; *pravibhaktāni*, have been fully classified, have been prescribed by making distinctions among them;—according to what?—*guṇaḥ*, according to the *guṇas*; *svabhāva-prabhavaiḥ*, born from Nature.

Nature means the Prakṛti of God, His Māyā consisting of the three *guṇas*. 'Born from Nature' means 'born of these (three *guṇas*).' In

accordance with these the duties such as control of the internal organs, etc. of the Brāhmaṇas and others have been classified. Or (the meaning is): The source of the nature of the Brāhmaṇas is the quality of *sattva*. Similarly, the source of the nature of the Kṣatriyas is *rajas*, with *sattva* as a subordinate (quality); the source of the nature of the Vaiśyas is *rajas*, with *tamas* as the subordinate (quality); the source of the nature of the Śūdras is *tamas*, with *rajas* as the subordinate (quality); for the natures of the four are seen to be tranquillity, lordliness, industriousness and dullness respectively. Or, *svabhava* (nature) means the (individual) tendencies of creatures earned in their past lives, which have become manifest in the present life for yielding their own results. The *guṇas* which have that *svabhāva* as their source (*prabhava*) are *svabhāva-prabhavaḥ guṇāḥ.*

Since the manifestation of the *guṇas* cannot logically be uncaused, therefore a specific cause (226) has been posited by saying that Nature is the cause.

Thus, the duties such as control of the internal organs etc. have been classified in keeping with the effects of the *guṇas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which are born of Nature, born of Prakṛti.

Objection: Well, are not the duties like controlling the internal organs etc. of the Brāhmaṇas and others classified and enjoined by the scriptures? Why is it said that they are classified according to the *guṇas sattva* etc.?

Reply: This objection is not valid. For, the duties like controlling the internal organs etc. of the Brāhmaṇas and others have been classified even by the scriptures verily in keeping with the specific qualities *sattva* etc.; certainly, not without reference to the *guṇas*. Hence, though the duties have been divided by the scriptures, they are said to have been classified according to the *guṇas*.

Which, again, are those duties? They are being spoken of:

शमो दमस्तप: शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥४२॥

42. The natural duties of the Brāhmaṇas are the control of the internal and external organs, austerity, purity, forgiveness, straightforwardness,

knowledge as also wisdom (227) and faith.

Svabhāvajam brahma-karma, the natural duties of the Brāhmaṇas, of the Brāhmaṇa caste; are *śamaḥ*, control of the internal organs; *damaḥ*, control of the external organs—these bear the meanings as explained earlier (see 6.3, 10.4, 16.1); *tapaḥ*, austerity—bodily austerity, as explained before (17.14); *śaucam*, purity, as already explained (in 13.7, 16.3); *kṣāntiḥ*, forgiveness; *ārjavam*, straightforwardness, simplicity; *jñānam*, knowledge; *eva ca*, as also *vijñānam*, wisdom; *āstikyam*, faith, the idea of truth (228), respect for the teaching of the scriptures. By *svabhāvajam* (natural) is conveyed the very same idea as was expressed in 'classified according to the *guṇas* born from Nature' (41).

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम्।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षत्रकर्म स्वभावजम्॥४३॥

43. The natural duties of the Kṣatriyas are heroism, boldness, fortitude, capability, and also not retreating from battle, generosity and lordliness.

Svabhāvajam, the natural; *kṣatra-karma*, (229) enjoined duties of the Kṣatriyas, of the Kṣatriya caste; are *śauryam*, heroism; *tejaḥ*, boldness; *dhṛtiḥ*, fortitude, as is seen in the case of one who is not depressed under all circumstances, being sustained by doggedness; *dākṣyam*, capability engagement without confusion in duties which suddenly present themselves; *api ca*, and also; *apalāyanam*, not retreating; *yuddhe*, from battle, not fleeing from enemies; *dānam*, generosity, being free in the distribution of gifts; *īśvarabhāvaḥ*, lordliness, manifesting (exercising) rulership over those who have to be ruled.

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम्।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्मशूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम्॥४४॥

44. The natural duties of the Vaiśyas are agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. Of the Śūdras, too, the natural duty is in the form of service.

Svabyāvajam, the natural; *vaiśya-karma*, duties of the Vaiśyas, of the Vaiśya caste; are *kṛṣi-gaurakṣya-vāṇijyam*, agriculture, cattle rearing and trade: *Kṛṣi* is tilling of land. One who rears cattle (*go*) is *gorakṣa*; the

abstract form of that word is *gaurakṣyam*, animal-husbandry. *Vāṇijyam* means the occupation of a trader, consisting of buying and selling.

Śūdrasya, of the Śūdra; *api*, too; *svabhāvajam*, the natural; *karma*, duty; is *paricaryātmakam*, in the form of service.

When rightly pursued, the natural result of these duties enjoined for the castes is the attainment of heaven—which fact is evident from such Smṛti texts as, 'People belonging to the castes and stages of life, who are true to their own duties, experience after death the fruit of their actions. And after that, as a result of the remnants of their merits they are born in some excellent region, caste and family, with greater piety, longevity, learning, conduct, wealth, happiness and intelligence' (Āp. Dh. Sū. 2.2.2.3), etc. And in the Purāṇas also it is particularly mentioned that people belonging to the (different) castes and stages of life come to have specific results in the form of different worlds.

But this result that is going to be stated follows from a different cause:

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरत: संसिद्धिं लभते नर:।
स्वकर्मनिरत: सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु॥४५॥

45. Being devoted to his own duty, man attains complete success. Hear that as to how one devoted to his own duty achieves success.

Sve sve karmaṇi abhirataḥ, being devoted to his own duty, which has different characteristics as stated above; *naraḥ*, man, the person qualified therefor; *labhate*, attains; *saṁsiddhim*, complete success, characterized as the *ability* for steadfastness in Knowledge, which follows from the elimination of the impurities of body and mind as a result of fulfilling his own duty. Does the complete success follow merely from the fulfilment of one's own duty? No. How then? Śṛṇu, hear; *tat*, that; *yathā*, as to how, through what means; *sva-karma-nirataḥ*, one devoted to his own duty; *vindati*, achieves; *siddhim*, success.

यत: प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम्।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानव:॥४६॥

46. A human being achieves success by adoring, through his own duties, Him from whom is the origin of creatures, and by whom is all this pervaded.

Mānavaḥ, a human being; *vindati*, achieves; *siddhim*, success, merely in the form of the *ability* for steadfastness in Knowledge; *abhyarcya*, by adoring, worshipping; *svakarmaṇā*, with his own duties stated above, as allotted to each caste; *tam*, Him, God; *yataḥ*, from whom, from which God; comes *pravṛttiḥ*, origin,—or, from which internal Ruler comes the activities; *bhūtānām*, of creatures, of living beings; and *yena*, by whom, by which God; is *tatam*, pervaded; *sarvam*, all; *idam*, this world.

Since this is so, therefore,

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम्॥४७॥

47. One's own duty, (though) defective, is superior to another's duty well performed. By performing a duty as dictated by one's own nature, one does not incur sin.

Svadharmaḥ, one's own duty; though *vigunaḥ*, defective—the word *though* has to be supplied—; is *śreyān*, superior to, more praiseworthy than; *para-dharmāt*, another's duty; *su-anuṣṭhitāt*, well performed. *Kurvan*, by performing; *karma*, a duty; *svabhāvaniyatam*, as dictated by one's own nature—this phrase means the same as *svabhāvajam* (born from Nature) which has been stated earlier—; *na āpnoti*, one does not incur; *kilbiṣam*, sin. As poison is not harmful to a worm born in it, so one does not incur sin by performing a duty dictated by one's own nature.

It has been said that, as in the case of a worm born in poison, a person does not incur sin while performing his duties which have been dictated by his own nature; and that someone else's duty is fraught with fear; also that, one who does not have the knowledge of the Self, (he) surely cannot remain even for a moment without doing work (cf. 3.5). Hence—

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत्।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः॥४८॥

48. O son of Kuntī, one should not give up the duty to which one is born, even though it be faulty. For all undertakings are surrounded with evil, as fire is with smoke.

Kaunteya, O son of Kuntī; *na tyajet*, one should not give up;—what?—the *karma*, duty; *sahajam*, to which one is born, which devolves from the very birth; *api*, even though; it be *sadoṣam*, faulty, consisting as it is of the three *guṇas*. *Hi*, for; *sarva-ārambhāḥ*, all undertakings (—whatever are begun are *ārambhāḥ*, that is 'all actions', according to the context—), being constituted by the three *guṇas* (—here, the fact of being constituted by the three *guṇas* is the cause—); are *āvṛtāḥ*, surrounded; *doṣeṇa*, with evil; *iva*, as; *agniḥ*, fire; is *dhūmena*, with smoke, which comes into being concurrently.

One does not get freed from evil by giving up the duty to which one is born—called one's own duty—, even though (he may be) fulfilling somebody else's duty. Another's duty, too, is fraught with fear. The meaning is: Since action cannot be totally given up by an unenlightened person, therefore he should not relinquish it.

Opponent: Well, is it that one should not abandon action because it cannot be given up completely, or is it because evil (230) follows from the giving up of the duty to which one is born?

Counter-objection: What follows from this?

Opponent: If it be that the duty to which one is born should not be renounced because it is impossible to relinquish it totally, then the conclusion that can be arrived at is that complete renunciation (of duty) is surely meritorious!

Counter-objection: Truly so. But, may it not be that total relinquishment is itself an impossibility? Is a person ever-changeful like the *guṇas* of the Sāṅkhyas, or is it that action itself is the agent, as it is in the case of the momentary five (231) forms of mundane consciousness propounded by the Buddhists? In either case there can be no complete renunciation of action.

Then there is also a third standpoint (as held by the Vaiśeṣikas): When a thing acts it is active, and inactive when that very thing does not act. If this be the case here, it is possible to entirely give up actions. But the speciality

of the third point of view is that a thing is not ever-changing, nor is action itself the agent. What then? A non-existent action originates in an existing thing, and an existing action gets destroyed. The thing-in-itself continues to exist along with its power (to act), and that itself is the agent. This is what the followers of Kaṇāda say. (232) What is wrong with this point of view?

Vedāntin: The defect indeed lies in this that, this view is not in accord with the Lord's view.

Objection: How is this known?

Vedāntin: Since the Lord has said, 'Of the unreal there is no being...,' etc. (2.16). The view of the followers of Kaṇāda is, indeed, this that the non-existent becomes existent, and the existent becomes non-existent.

Objection: What defect can there be if it be that this view, even though not the view of the Lord, yet conforms to reason?

Vedāntin: The answer is: This is surely faulty since it contradicts all valid evidence.

Objection: How?

Vedāntin: As to this, if things like a *dvyaṇuka* (dyad of two *aṇus*, atoms) be absolutely non-existent before origination, and after origination continue for a little while, and again become absolutely non-existent, then, in that case, the existent which was verily non-existent comes into being, (233) a non-entity becomes an entity, and an entity becomes a non-entity! If this be the view, then the non-entity that is to take birth is comparable to the horns of a hare before it is born, and it comes into being with the help of what are called material (inherent), non-material (non-inherent) and efficient causes. But it cannot be said that non-existence has origination in this way, or that it depends on some cause, since this is not seen in the case of non-existent things like horns of a hare, etc. If such things as pot etc. which are being produced be of the nature of (potentially) existing things, then it can be accepted that they originate by depending on some cause which merely manifests them. (234) Moreover, if the non-existent becomes existent, and the existent becomes non-existent, then nobody will have any faith while dealing with any of the means of valid knowledge or objects of

such knowledge, because the conviction will be lacking that the existent is existent and the non-existent is non-existent!

Further, when they speak of origination, they (the Vaiśeṣikas) hold that such a thing as a *dvyaṇuka* (dyad) comes to have relationship with its own (material) causes (the two atoms) and existence, and that it is non-existent before origination; but later on, depending on the operation of its own causes, it becomes connected with its own causes, viz. the atoms, as also with existence, through the inherent (or inseparable) relationship called *samavāya*. After becoming connected, it becomes an existent thing by its inherent relationship with its causes. (235)

It has to be stated in this regard as to how the non-existent can have an existent as its cause, or have relationship with anything. For nobody can establish through any valid means of knowledge that a son of a barren woman can have any existence or relationship or cause.

Vaiśeṣika: Is it not that relationship of a non-existent thing is not at all established by the Vaiśeṣikas? Indeed, what is said by them is that only existent entities like *dvyaṇuka* etc. have the relationship in the form of *samavāya* with their own causes.

Vedāntin: No, for it is not admitted (by them) that anything has existence before the (*samavāya*) relationship (occurs). It is surely not held by the Vaiśeṣikas that a pot etc. have any existence before the potter, (his) stick, wheel, etc. start functioning. Nor do they admit that clay itself takes the shape of a pot etc. As a result, it has to be admitted (by them) as the last alternative that non-existence itself has some relationship!

Vaiśeṣika: Well, it is not contradictory even for a non-existent thing to have the relationship in the form of inherence.

Vedāntin: No, because this is not seen in the case of a son of a barren woman etc. If the antecedent non-existence (*prāg-abhāva*) of the pot etc. alone comes into a relationship with its own (material) cause, but not so the non-existence of the son of a barren woman etc. though as non-existence both are the same, then the distinction between the (two) non-existences has to be explained. Through such descriptions (of *abhāva*, non-existence) as non-existence of one, non-existence of two, non-existence of all, antecedent

non-existence, non-existence after destruction, mutual non-existence and absolute non-existence, nobody can show any distinction (as regards non-existence itself)! There being no distinction, (therefore, to say that:) ‘it is only the “antecedent non-existence” of the pot which takes the form of the pot through the (action of) the potter and others, and comes into a relationship with the existing pot-halves which are its own (material) causes and becomes fit for all empirical processes (236); but the “non-existence after destruction” of that very pot does not do so, though it, too, is non-existence. Hence, the “non-existence after destruction”, etc. (237) are not fit for any empirical processes, whereas only the “antecedent non-existence” of things called *dvyaṇuka* etc. is fit for such empirical processes as origination etc.’—all this is incongruous, since as non-existence it is indistinguishable, as are ‘absolute non-existence’ and ‘non-existence after destruction’.

Vaiśeṣika: Well, it is not at all said by us that the ‘antecedent non-existence’ becomes existent.

Vedāntin: In that case, the existent itself becomes existent, as for instance, a pot’s becoming a pot, or a cloth’s becoming a cloth. This, too, like non-existence becoming existent, goes against valid evidence.

Even the theory of transformation held by the Sāṅkhyas does not differ from the standpoint of the Vaiśeṣikas, since they believe in the origination of some new attribute (238) and its destruction. Even if manifestation and disappearance of anything be accepted, yet there will be contradiction with valid means of knowledge as before in the explanation of existence or non-existence of manifestation and disappearance. Hereby is also refuted the idea that origination etc. (of an effect) are merely particular states of its cause. As the last alternative, it is only the one entity called Existence that is imagined variously through ignorance to be possessed of the states of origination, destruction, etc. like an actor (on a stage). This view of the Lord has been stated in the verse, ‘Of the unreal there is no being...’ (2.16). For, the idea of existence is constant, while the others are inconstant.

Objection: If the Self be immutable, then how does the ‘renunciation of all actions’ become illogical?

Vedāntin: If the adjuncts (that is body and organs) be real or imagined through ignorance, in either case, action, which is their attribute, is surely superimposed on the Self through ignorance. From this point of view it has been said that an unenlightened person is incapable of totally renouncing actions even for a moment (cf. 3.5). The enlightened person, on the other hand, can indeed totally renounce actions when ignorance has been dispelled through Illumination; for it is illogical that there can (then) remain any trace of what has been superimposed through ignorance. Indeed, no trace remains of the two moons, etc. superimposed by the vision affected by (the disease called) Timira when the disease is cured.

This being so, the utterance, 'having given up all actions mentally' (5.13), etc. as also, 'Being devoted to his own duty' (45) and 'A human being achieves success by adoring Him through his own duties (46)', becomes justifiable.

What was verily spoken of as the success arising from Karma (-yoga), characterized as the *fitness* for steadfastness in Knowledge,—the fruit of that (fitness), characterized as 'steadfastness in Knowledge' consisting in the perfection in the form of the state of one (that is a monk) free from duties, has to be stated. Hence the (following) verse is begun:

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति॥४९॥

49. He whose intellect remains unattached to everything, who has conquered his internal organs and is desireless, attains through monasticism the supreme perfection consisting in the state of one free from duties.

Asakta-buddhiḥ, he whose intellect, the internal organ, remains unattached; *sarvatra*, to everything, with regard to son, wife and others who are the causes of attachment; *jitātmā*, who has conquered his internal organs; and *vigata-spṛhaḥ*, who is desireless, whose thirst for his body, life and objects of enjoyment have been eradicated;—he who is such a knower of the Self, *adhigacchati*, attains; *sannyāsena*, through monasticism, through perfect knowledge or through renunciation of all actions preceded by this knowledge; the *paramām*, supreme, most excellent; *naiṣkarmya-siddhim*, perfection consisting in the state of one free from duties.

One is said to be free from duties from whom duties have departed as a result of realizing that the actionless Brahman is his Self; his state is *naiṣkarmyam*. That *siddhi* (perfection) which is this *naiṣkarmya* is *naiṣkarmya-siddhi*. Or, this phrase means 'achievement of *naiṣkarmya*', that is, achievement of the state of remaining established in one's own real nature as the actionless Self—which is different from the success arising from Karma (-yoga), and is of the form of being established in the state of immediate Liberation. Accordingly has it been said, '...having given up all actions mentally, ... without doing or causing (others) to do anything at all' (5.13).

The stages through which one who has attained success—which has the aforesaid characteristics and which arises from the performance of one's own duties mentioned earlier as worship of God—, and in whom has arisen discriminative knowledge, achieves perfection—in the form of exclusive adherence to Knowledge of the Self and consisting in the state of one free from duties—have to be stated. With this in view the Lord says:

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा॥५०॥

50. Understand for certain from Me, in brief indeed, O son of Kuntī, that process by which one who has achieved success attains Brahman, which is the supreme consummation of Knowledge.

Nibodha, understand for certain; *me*, from Me, from My utterance—. Is it elaborately? The Lord says, no, *samāsena*, in brief; *eva*, indeed, O son of Kuntī, how *siddhim prāptaḥ*, one who has achieved success, one who, by worshipping God through one's duties, has achieved success in the form of *fitness* of the body and organs for steadfastness in Knowledge, which comes from His grace; (—the reiteration of the phrase *siddhim prāptaḥ* is meant for introducing what follows; what is that succeeding subject for which this reiteration stands is being answered:) *yathā tathā*, that process by which, that process in the form of steadfastness in Knowledge, by which that process of acquiring steadfastness in Knowledge by which; *āpnoti*, attains; *brahma*, Brahman, the supreme Self—.

In order to point out—as ‘It is this’—the realization of Brahman which was promised in, ‘that process by which one … attains Brahman,’ the Lord says; *yā*, which; is the *parā*, supreme; *niṣṭhā*, consummation, that is the supreme culmination; *jñānasya*, of Knowledge. Of what? Of the knowledge of Brahman. Of what kind is it? It is of the same kind as the realization of the Self. Of what kind is that? As is the Self. Of what nature is It? As has been described by the Lord and the Upaniṣadic texts, and established through reason.

Objection: Is it not that knowledge takes the form of its object? But it is not admitted anywhere that the Self is an object, or even that It has form.

Pseudo-Vedāntin: Is it not heard of in such texts as, ‘radiant like the sun’ (Śv. 3.8), ‘Of the nature of effulgence’ (Ch. 3.14.2) and ‘Self-effulgent’ (Bṛ. 4.3.9), that the Self has form?

Objection: No, because those sentences are meant for refuting the idea that the Self is of the nature of darkness. When the Self is denied of possessing forms of substance, quality, etc., the contingency arises of the Self’s being of the nature of darkness. The sentences, ‘radiant like the sun,’ etc. are meant for rebutting this. And this follows from the specific denial of form by saying, ‘Formless’ (Ka. 1.3.15), and from such texts as, ‘His form does not exist within the range of vision; nobody sees Him with the eye’ (Ka. 2.3.9: Śv. 4.20), ‘soundless, touchless’ (Ka. 1.3.15), etc. which show that the Self is not an object of perception. Therefore it remains unproved that there can be any knowledge which takes the form of the Self. How, then, can there be the knowledge of the Self? For, all knowledge that there can be with regard to objects assumes their respective forms. And it has been said that the Self has no form. Moreover, if both knowledge and the Self be formless, then how can there be the consummation (239) of the (repeated) contemplation on that (knowledge of the Self)?

Vedāntin: No. Since it can be established that the Self is supremely taintless, pure and subtle, and it can also be established that the intellect can have taintlessness etc. like the Self, therefore it stands to reason that the intellect can take a form resembling the consciousness of the Self. The mind becomes impressed with the semblance of the intellect; the organs become impressed with the semblance of the mind; and the body becomes

impressed with the semblance of the organs. Hence it is that the idea of the body itself being the Self is held by ordinary people. The Lokāyatikas (materialists), who hold that the body is identical with consciousness, say that a person is a body endowed with consciousness; so also there are others who say that the organs are identical with consciousness; there are others who say that the mind is identical with consciousness, and still others who say that the intellect is identical with consciousness. Some accept as the Self the Unmanifest (240), called the Undifferentiated, which is more internal than that (intellect) and is within the domain of (primordial) ignorance. Indeed, in every case, beginning from the intellect to the body, the cause of mis-conceived Selfhood is the semblance of the Consciousness that is the Self. Hence, knowledge about the Self is not a subject for injunction.

What then? Only the eradication of the superimposition of name, form, etc., which are not the Self, is what has to be undertaken, but not the knowledge of the Self that is Consciousness. For it is the Self which is experienced as possessed of the forms of all the various objects that are superimposed (on It) through ignorance. It is evidently because of this that the Buddhists who uphold the view of (momentary) consciousness have concluded that there is no substance at all apart from (momentary) consciousness, and that it is not in need of any other valid proof since they hold that it is self-cognized. Therefore, what is to be undertaken is only the elimination of the superimposition on Brahman through ignorance, but no effort is needed for *knowing* Brahman (Consciousness), for It is quite self-evident! It is because the intellect is distracted by particular appearances of name and form imagined through ignorance that Brahman, even though self-evident, easily realizable, nearer than all else and identical with oneself, appears to be concealed, difficult to realize, very far and different. But to those whose intellect has become free from external appearances and who have obtained the grace of a teacher and serenity of mind, there is nothing more blissful, manifest, well known, easily realized and nearer to oneself than this Self. And thus it has been declared, ‘directly realizable, righteous,’ etc. (9.2).

However, some wiseacres assert that the intellect cannot comprehend the entity called the Self since It is formless; hence, complete steadfastness in Knowledge is impossible. This is truly so for those who have not

associated with a traditional line of teachers; who have not heard the Upaniṣads; whose intellects are too much engrossed with external objects; and who have not applied themselves diligently to the perfect means of knowledge. For those, on the other hand, who are the opposite of these, it is absolutely impossible to have the idea of reality with regard to empirical objects, which are within the realm of duality involving the knower and the known, because in their case there is no perception of any other thing apart from the Consciousness that is the Self. We have already said how this is certainly so and not otherwise. It has been stated by the Lord also, 'That during which creatures keep awake, it is night to the seeing sage' (2.69).

Therefore, the cessation of the perception of differences in the form of external things is alone the cause of resting in the reality of the Self. For, that which is called the Self is never an object which is not well known, attainable, rejectable or acceptable to anyone at any time. Were that Self to be indeed not self-evident, all activities would become meaningless. (241) For it cannot be imagined that they could be undertaken for unconscious objects like the body etc. Besides, it cannot be that pleasure is for pleasure's sake, or that sorrow is for sorrow's sake. Moreover, all empirical dealings are meant for culminating in the realization of the Self. (242) Therefore, just as for knowing one's own body there is no need of any other (external) means of knowledge, so also there is no need of any other means of knowledge for the realization of the Self which is innermost (in relation to the body etc.). Hence it is established that steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self is a fact very well known to the discriminating people.

Even to those who hold that knowledge is formless and not cognized by direct perception, cognition of an object is dependent on knowledge. Hence it has to be admitted that knowledge is as immediate as pleasure etc. And this follows also from the impossibility of a desire to know (knowledge). Had knowledge been not self-evident, it could have been sought for like any object of knowledge. And in that case, as (243) a knower seeks to perceive through knowledge such objects of knowledge as pot etc., similarly the knower would have sought to perceive knowledge through another knowledge! But this is not the case. Therefore knowledge is quite self-revealing, and for the very same reason the knower also is self-revealed. Hence, effort is not needed for knowledge, but only for the removal of the

notion of what is not-Self. (244) Consequently, steadfastness in Knowledge is easy of accomplishment.

It is being stated how this supreme consummation of Knowledge is to be attained:

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च।
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च॥५१॥

51. Being endowed with a pure intellect, and controlling oneself with fortitude, rejecting the objects—beginning from sound (245), and eliminating attachment and hatred;

Yuktaḥ, being endowed; *buddhyā*, with an intellect—which is identical with the faculty of determination; *viśuddhayā*, pure, free from *māyā* (delusion); and *niyamya*, controlling, subduing; *ātmānam*, oneself, the aggregate of body and organs; *dhṛtyā*, with fortitude, with steadiness; *tyaktvā*, rejecting; *viṣayān*, the objects; *śabdādīn*, beginning from sound—from the context it follows that 'rejecting the objects' means rejecting all things which are meant for pleasure and are in excess of those meant only for the mere maintenance of the body; and *vyudasya*, eliminating; *rāga-dveṣau*, attachment and hatred with regard to things which come to hand for the maintenance of the body—.

Therefore,

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः॥५२॥

52. One who resorts to solitude, eats sparingly, has speech, body and mind under control, to whom meditation and concentration are ever the highest (duty), and who is possessed of dispassion;

Vivikta-sevī, one who resorts to solitude, is habituated to repairing into such solitary places as a forest, bank of a river, mountain caves, etc.; *laghuāśī*, eats sparingly, is habituated to eating a little—repairing to solitary places and eating sparingly are mentioned here since they are the causes of tranquillity of mind through the elimination of defects like sleep etc.—; the person steadfast in Knowledge, *yata-vāk-kāya-mānasaḥ*, who has speech,

body and mind under control—. That monk, steadfast in Knowledge, should have his speech, body and mind under control. Having all his organs withdrawn thus, *dhyāna-yoga-paraḥ nityam*, one to whom meditation and concentration are ever the highest (duty)—meditation is thinking of the real nature of the Self, and concentration is making the mind one-pointed with regard to the Self itself; one to whom these meditation and concentration are the highest (duty) is *dhyāna-yoga-paraḥ*—. *Nityam*, (ever) is used to indicate the absence of other duties like repetition of *mantra* *(246)* etc.

Samupāśritāḥ, one who is fully possessed, that is ever possessed; of *vairāgyam*, dispassion, absence of longing for objects seen or unseen—.

Further,

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम्।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥५३॥

53. (That person,) having discarded egotism, force, pride, desire, anger and superfluous possessions, free from the idea of possession, and serene, is fit for becoming Brahman.

(That person) *vimucya*, having discarded; *ahaṅkāram*, egotism, thinking of the body, organs, etc. as the ego; *balam*, force—which is associated with desire and attachment; not the other kind of strength consisting in the fitness of the body etc., because being natural it cannot be discarded—; *darpam*, pride, which follows elation and leads to transgression of righteousness—for the Smṛti says, 'An elated person becomes proud; a proud man transgresses righteousness' (Āp. Dh. Sū. 1.13.4); *kāmam*, desire; *krodham*, anger, aversion; *parigraham*, superfluous possessions—even after removing the defects in the organs and the mind, there arises the possibility of acceptance of gifts either for the maintenance of the body or for righteous duties; discarding them as well, that is becoming a mendicant of the *parama-haṁsa* class; *nirmamaḥ*, free from the idea of possession, becoming devoid of the idea of 'me' and 'mine' even with regard to so much as one's body and life; and for the very same reason, *śāntaḥ*, serene, withdrawn; the monk who is effortless and steadfast in Knowledge, *kalpate*, becomes fit; *brahma-bhūyāya*, for becoming Brahman.

ब्रह्मभूत: प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न कांक्षति।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्॥५४॥

54. One who has become Brahman and has attained the blissful Self does not grieve or desire. Becoming the same towards all beings, he attains supreme devotion to Me.

Brahma-bhūtaḥ, one who has become Brahman, attained Brahman through the above process; and *prasanna-ātmā*, (247) has attained the blissful Self, the indwelling Self; *na*, does not; *śocati*, grieve—does not lament for the loss of something or the lack of some quality in oneself; nor *kāṅkṣati*, desire. By saying 'he does not grieve nor desire', this nature of one who has attained Brahman is being restated. For it does not stand to reason that in the case of a knower of Brahman there can be any hankering for something unattained. Or, (in place of *kāṅkṣati*) the reading may be *na hṛṣyati*, does not become elated.

Becoming *samaḥ*, the same; *sarveṣu bhūteṣu*, towards all beings—that is, he verily judges what is happiness and sorrow in all beings by the same standard as he would apply to himself (cf. 6.32); but the meaning is not 'seeing the Self alike in all beings', for this will be spoken of in (the next verse), 'Through devotion he knows Me'—; he, the one who is of this kind and steadfast in Knowledge, *labhate*, attains; *parām*, supreme; *madbhaktim*, devotion to Me, to the supreme Lord; (he attains) devotion which is described as Knowledge, as the 'fourth' in, '...four classes of people … adore Me' (7.16).

Then,

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वत:।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम्॥५५॥

55. Through devotion he knows Me in reality, as to what and who I am. Then, having known Me in truth, he enters (into Me) immediately after that (Knowledge).

Bhaktyā, through devotion, through that devotion described as Knowledge; *abhijānāti*, he knows; *mām*, Me; *tattvataḥ*, in reality; as to *yāvān*, what I am, with the extensive differences created by limiting

adjuncts; and *yaḥ asmi*, who I am when all distinctions created by the limiting adjuncts are destroyed—Me who am the supreme Person comparable to space (248) and one-without-a-second, absolute, homogeneous Consciousness, birthless, ageless, immortal, fearless and deathless.

Tataḥ, then; *jñātvā*, having known; *mām*, Me, thus; *tattvataḥ*, in truth; *viśate*, he enters into Me, Myself; *tadanantaram*, immediately after that (Knowledge). Here, by saying, 'having known, he enters without delay', it is not meant that the acts of 'knowing' and 'entering immediately after' are different. What then? What is meant is the absolute Knowledge itself that has to no other result, (249) for it has been said, 'And … understand Me to be the "Knower of the field", (13.2).

Opponent: Has it not been contradictory to say, he knows Me through that which is the supreme steadiness (*niṣṭhā*) in Knowledge?

Vedāntin: If it be asked, How it is contradictory?

Opponent: The answer is: Whenever any Knowledge of something arises in a knower, at that very moment the knower knows that object. Hence, he does not depend on steadfastness in knowledge which consists in the repetition of the act of knowing. And therefore, it is contradictory to say one knows not through knowledge, but through steadfastness in knowledge which is a repetition of the act of knowing.

Vedāntin: There is no such fault, since the culmination of Knowledge—which (Knowledge) is associated with the causes of its unfoldment and maturity, and which has nothing to contradict it—in the conviction that one's own Self has been realized is what is referred to by the word *niṣṭhā* (consummation): When knowledge—which concerns the identity of the 'Knower of the field' and the supreme Self, and which remains associated with the renunciation of all actions that arise from the perception of the distinction among their accessories such as agent etc., and which unfolds from the instruction of the scriptures and teachers, depending on purity of the intellect etc. and humility etc. which are the auxiliary causes of the origin and maturity of Knowledge—continues in the form of the conviction that one's own Self has been realized, then that continuance is called the supreme steadfastness (*niṣṭhā*) in Knowledge.

This steadfastness in Knowledge that is such has been spoken of as the highest, the fourth kind of devotion in relation to the three other devotions, viz. of the afflicted, etc. (cf. 7.16). Through that highest devotion one realizes the Lord in truth. Immediately after that the idea of difference between the Lord and the Knower of the field vanishes totally. Therefore the statement, 'one knows Me through devotion in the form of steadfastness in Knowledge', is not contradictory. And, in this sense, all the scriptures—consisting of Vedānta (Upaniṣads etc.), History, Mythology and Smṛtis—, as for instance, 'Knowing (this very Self the Brāhmaṇas) renounce ... and lead a mendicant's life' (Bṛ. 3.5.1), 'Therefore they speak of monasticism as excellent among these austerities' (Ma. Nā. 24.1), 'Monasticism verily became supreme' (ibid. 21.2), which enjoin renunciation become meaningful. Thus, monasticism means renunciation of rites and duties. There are also the texts, 'Having renounced the Vedas as well as this world and the next' (Ap. Dh. Sū. 2.9.13), and 'Give up religion and irreligion' (Mbh. Śā. 329.40; 331.44), etc. And here (in the *Gītā*) also (various relevant) passages have been pointed out. It is not proper that those texts should be meaningless. Nor are they merely eulogistic, since they occur in their own contexts. Besides, Liberation consists in being established in the changeless real nature of the indwelling Self. Indeed, it is not possible that one who wants to go to the eastern sea and the other who wants to go in the opposite direction to the western sea can have the same course!

And steadfastness in Knowledge consists in being totally absorbed in maintaining a current of thought with regard to the indwelling Self. And that is opposed to coexistence with duties, like going to the western sea. It has been the conclusion of those versed in the valid means of knowledge that the difference between them is as wide as that between a mountain and a mustard seed! Therefore it is established that one should have recourse to steadfastness in Knowledge only, by relinquishing all rites and duties.

The fruit of the attainment of success from the Yoga of Devotion consisting in worshiping the Lord with one's own actions is the *ability* to remain steadfast in Knowledge, from which, follows *steadfastness* in Knowledge, culminating in the result, Liberation. That Yoga of Devotion to the Lord is now being praised in this concluding section dealing with the

purport of the Scripture, with a view to generating a firm conviction with regard to it (the purport of the Scripture):

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रय:।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम्॥५६॥

56. Ever engaging even in all actions, one to whom I am the refuge, attains the eternal, immutable State through My grace.

Sadā, ever; *kurvāṇaḥ api*, engaging even in; *sarva-karmāṇi*, all actions, even the prohibited ones; *madvyapāśrayaḥ*, one to whom I am the refuge, to whom I, Vāsudeva the Lord, am the refuge, that is one who has totally surrendered himself to Me; even he, *āpnoti*, attains; the *śāśvatam*, eternal; *avyayam*, immutable; *padam*, State of Viṣṇu; *mat-prasādāt*, through My, that is God's grace.

Since this is so, therefore,

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पर:।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्त: सततं भव॥५७॥

57. Mentally surrendering all actions to Me and accepting Me as the supreme, have your mind ever fixed on Me by resorting to the concentration of your intellect.

Cetasā, mentally, with a discriminating intellect; *sannyasya*, surrendering; *sarva-karmāṇi*, all actions meant for seen or unseen results; *mayi*, to Me, to God, in the manner described in, 'whatever you do, whatever you eat' (9.27); and *matparaḥ*, accepting Me as the supreme—you to whom I, Vāsudeva, am the supreme, are *matparaḥ*; becoming so; *satatam*, ever; *maccittaḥ bhava*, have your mind fixed only on Me; *upāśritya*, by resorting—*resorting* implies not taking recourse to anything else—; *buddhi-yogam*, to the concentration of your intellect. Having the intellect (*buddhi*) concentrated on Me is *buddhi-yoga*.

मच्चित्त: सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि।
अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनंक्ष्यसि॥५८॥

58. Having your mind fixed on Me, you will cross over all difficulties through My grace. If, on the other hand, you do not listen out of egotism, you will get destroyed.

Maccittaḥ, having your mind fixed on Me; *tariṣyasi*, you will cross over; *sarva-durgāṇi*, all difficulties, all causes of transmigration which are difficult to overcome; *mat-prasādāt*, through My grace. *Atha cet*, if, on the other hand; *tvam*, you; *na śroṣyasi*, will not listen to, will not accept, My words; *ahaṅkārāt*, out of egotism, thinking 'I am learned'; then *vinaṅkṣyasi*, you will get destroyed, will court ruin.

And this should not be thought of by you—'I am independent. Why should I follow another's bidding?'

यदहंकारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति॥५९॥

59. That you think 'I shall not fight', by relying on egotism,—vain is this determination of yours. (Your) nature will impel you!

Yat, that; *manyase*, you think, resolve; this—'*na yotsye*, I shall not fight'; *āśritya*, by relying; on *ahaṅkāram*, egotism, *mithyā*, vain; is *eṣaḥ*, this; *vyavasāyaḥ*, determination; *te*, of yours; because *prakṛtiḥ*, nature, your own nature of a Kṣatriya; *niyokṣyati*, will impel; *tvām*, you!

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत्॥६०॥

60. Being bound by your own duty born of nature, O son of Kuntī, you, being helpless, will verily do that which you do not wish to do owing to indiscrimination.

And because of *nibaddhaḥ*, being securely bound; *svena*, by your own; *karmaṇā*, duty; *svabhāvajena*, born of nature (250) —heroism etc. as stated (in 43); O son of Kuntī, you, *avaśaḥ*, being helpless, under another's control; *kariṣyasi api*, will verily do; *tat*, that duty; *yat*, which duty; you *na*, do not; *icchasi*, wish; *kartum*, to do; *mohāt*, owing to indiscrimination.

For,

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति।

भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया॥६१॥

61. O Arjuna, the Lord resides in the region of the heart of all creatures, revolving through Māyā all the creatures (as though) mounted on a machine!

Arjuna, O Arjuna—one whose self is naturally white (pure), that is one possessing a pure internal organ. This follows from the Vedic text, 'The day is dark and the day is *arjuna* (white) (Ṛg. 6.9.1). *Iśvaraḥ*, the Lord, Nārāyaṇa the Ruler; *tiṣṭhati*, resides, remains seated; *hṛd-deśe*, in the region of the heart; *sarva-bhūtānām*, of all creatures, of all living beings. How does He reside? In answer the Lord says: *bhrāmayan*, revolving; *māyayā*, through Māyā, through delusion; *sarva-bhūtāni*, all the creatures; as though *yantra-ārūḍhāni*, mounted on a machine—like man' etc., made of wood, mounted on a machine. The word *iva* (as though) has to be thus understood here. *Bhrāmayan*, revolving, is to be connected with *tiṣṭhati*, resides (conveying the idea, 'resides...while revolving').

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्॥६२॥

62. Take refuge in Him alone with your whole being, O scion of the Bharata dynasty. Through His grace you will attain the supreme Peace and the eternal Abode.

Gaccha śaraṇam, take refuge; *tam eva*, in Him, the Lord alone; *sarva-bhāvena*, with your whole being, for getting rid of your mundane sufferings, O scion of the Bharata dynasty. *Tat-prasādāt*, through His grace, through God's grace; *prāpsyasi*, you will attain; *parām*, the supreme; *śāntim*, Peace, the highest Tranquillity; and the *śāśvatam*, eternal; *sthānam*, Abode, the supreme State of Mine who am Viṣṇu.

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद् गुह्यतरं मया।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु॥६३॥

63. To you has been imparted by Me this knowledge (251) which is more secret than any secret. Pondering over this as a whole, do as you like.

Te, to you; *ākhyātam*, has been imparted, spoken of; *mayā*, by Me who am the omniscient God; *iti*, this; *jñānam*, knowledge; which is *guhyataram*, more secret; *guhyāt*, than any secret—i.e. it is extremely profound, mystical. *Vimṛśya*, pondering over, contemplating on; *etat*, this, the Scripture as imparted; *aśeṣeṇa*, as a whole, and also on all the subjects dealt with; *kuru*, do; *yathā icchasi tathā*, as you like.

'Once again, hear what is being said by Me:'

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम्॥६४॥

64. Listen again to My highest utterance which is the profoundest of all. Since you are ever dear to Me, therefore I shall speak what is beneficial to you.

Śṛṇu, listen; *bhūyaḥ*, again; to *me*, My; *paramam*, highest; *vacaḥ*, utterance; which is *sarva-guhyatamam*, profoundest of all, most secret of all secrets, though it has been repeatedly stated. Neither from fear nor even for the sake of money am I speaking! What then? *Iti*, since, considering that; *asi*, you are; *dṛḍham*, ever, unwaveringly; *iṣṭaḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me; *tataḥ*, therefore, for that reason; *vakṣyāmi*, I shall speak; what is *hitam*, beneficial; *te*, to you, what is the highest means of attaining Knowledge. That is indeed the most beneficial of all beneficial things.

'What is that (You are going to tell me)?' In answer the Lord says:

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे॥६५॥

65. Have your mind fixed on Me, be My devotee, be a sacrificer to Me and bow down to Me. (Thus) you will come to Me alone. (This) truth do I promise to you. (For) you are dear to Me.

Bhava manmanā, have your mind fixed on Me; be *mad-bhaktaḥ*, My devotee; be a *madyājī*, sacrificer to Me, be engaged in sacrifices to Me; *namaskuru*, bow down; *mām*, to Me. Offer even your salutations to Me alone. Continuing thus in them, by surrendering all ends, means and needs to Vāsudeva only, *eṣyasi*, you will come; *mām*, to Me; *eva*, alone. (This)

satyam, truth: do I *pratijāne*, promise; *te*, to you, i.e. in this matter I make this true promise. For, *asi*, you are; *priyaḥ*, dear; *me*, to Me.

The idea conveyed by the passage is: Having thus understood that the Lord is true in His promise, and knowing for certain that Liberation is the unfailing result of devotion to the Lord, one should have dedication to God as his only supreme goal.

Having summed up surrender to God as the highest secret of steadiness in Karma-yoga, thereafter, with the idea that complete realization, which is the fruit of adherence to Karma-yoga and which has been enjoined in all the Upaniṣads, has to be spoken about, the Lord says:

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥६६॥

66. Abandoning all forms of rites and duties, take refuge in Me alone. I shall free you from all sins. (Therefore) do not grieve.

Sarva-dharmān, all forms of rites and duties: Here the word *dharma* (righteousness) includes *adharma* (unrighteousness) as well; for, what is intended is total renunciation of all actions, as is enjoined in Vedic and Smṛti texts like, 'One who has not desisted from bad actions' (Ka. 1.2.24), 'Give up religion and irreligion' (Mbh. Śā. 329.40), etc.

Parityajya, abandoning all rites and duties; (252) *śaraṇam vraja*, take refuge; *mām ekam*, in Me alone, the Self of all, the same in all, existing in all beings, the Lord, the Imperishable, free from being in the womb, birth, old age and death—by knowing that I am verily so. That is, know it for certain that there is nothing besides Me. By revealing My real nature, *aham*, I; *mokṣayiṣyāmi*, shall free; *tvā*, you, who have this certitude of understanding; *sarva-pāpebhyaḥ*, from all sins, from all bondages in the form of righteousness and unrighteousness. It has also been stated, 'I, residing in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance with the luminous lamp of Knowledge' (10.11). Therefore, *mā*, do not; *śucaḥ*, grieve, that is do not sorrow.

In this scripture, the *Gītā*, has Knowledge been established as the supreme means to Liberation, or is it action, or both?

Why does the doubt arise?

(Because) the passages like, '...by realizing which one attains Immortality' (13.12), 'Then, having known Me in truth, he enters (into Me) immediately after that (Knowledge)' (55), etc. point to the attainment of Liberation through Knowledge alone. Texts like, 'Your right is for action alone' (2.47), '(you undertake) action itself' (4.15), etc. show that actions have to be undertaken as a matter of compulsory duty. Since both Knowledge and action are thus enjoined as duties, therefore the doubt may arise that they, in combination as well, may become the cause of Liberation.

Objection: What, again, would be the result of this inquiry?

Vedāntin: Well, the result will verily be this: The ascertainment of one of these as the cause of the highest good. Hence this has to be investigated more extensively.

Knowledge of the Self, however, is exclusively the cause of the highest good; for, through the removal of the idea of differences, it culminates in the result that is Liberation. The idea of distinction among action, agent and result is ever active with regard to the Self because of ignorance. This ignorance in the form, 'My work; I am the agent; I shall do this work for that result', has been at work from time without beginning. The dispeller of this ignorance is this Knowledge regarding the Self—in the form, 'I am the absolute, non-agent, free from action and result; there is none else other than myself'—because, when it (Knowledge) arises it dispels the idea of differences which is the cause of engagement in action.

The word 'however' above is used for ruling out the other two alternatives. This refutes the two other alternative views by showing that the highest good cannot be attained through mere actions, nor by a combination of Knowledge and action. Besides, since Liberation is not a product, therefore it is illogical that it should have action as its means. Indeed, an eternal entity cannot be produced by either action or Knowledge.

Objection: In that case, even exclusive Knowledge is purposeless.

Vedāntin: No, since Knowledge, being the destroyer of ignorance, culminates in Liberation which is a directly experienced result. The fact that Knowledge, which removes the darkness of ignorance, culminates in

Liberation as its result is directly perceived in the same way as is the result of the light of a lamp which removes ignorance in the form of snake etc. and darkness from objects such as rope etc. Indeed, the result of light amounts to the mere (awareness of the) rope, free from the wrong notions of snake etc. So is the case with Knowledge.

As in the case of the acts like ‘cutting down’, ‘producing fire by friction’ etc., in which accessories such as the agent and others operate, and which have perceivable results, there is no possibility of (the agent etc.) engaging in any other activity giving some other result apart from ‘splitting into two’, ‘seeing (or lighting of) fire’ etc, similarly, in the case of the agent and the other factors engaged in the ‘act’ of steadfastness in Knowledge which has a tangible result, there is no possibility of (their) engagement in any other action which has a result different from that in the form of the sole existence of the Self. Hence, steadfastness in Knowledge combined with action is not logical.

Objection: May it not be argued that this is possible like the acts of eating and Agnihotra sacrifice etc.? (253)

Vedāntin: No, since it is unreasonable that, when Knowledge which results in Liberation is attained, there can remain a hankering for results of actions. Just as there is no desire for an action or its result (254) in connection with a well, pond, etc. when there is a flood all around, similarly when Knowledge which has Liberation for its result is attained there can be no possibility of hankering for any other result or any action which leads to it. Indeed, when somebody is engaged in actions aimed at winning a kingdom, there can be no possibility of his engaging in any activity for securing a piece of land, or having a longing for it!

Hence, action does not constitute the means to the highest good. Nor do Knowledge and action in combination. Further, Knowledge which has Liberation as its result can have no dependence on the assistance of action, because, being the remover of ignorance, it is opposed (to action). Verily, darkness cannot be the dispeller of darkness. Therefore, Knowledge alone is the means to the highest good.

Objection: Not so, because from non-performance of *nityakarmas* one incurs sin. Besides, freedom (of the Self) is eternal. As for the view that Liberation is attainable through Knowledge alone, it is wrong. For, if *nityakarmas (255)* which are prescribed by the Vedas are not performed, then one will incur evil in the form of going to hell, etc.

Counter-objection: If this be so, then, since Liberation cannot come from action, will there not arise the contingency of there being no Liberation at all?

Pseudo-Vedāntin: Not so, for Liberation is eternal. As a result of performing *nityakarmas* there will not be incurring of evil, and as a result of not doing any prohibited action (*niṣiddha-karma*) there will not be any possibility of birth in an undesirable body; from relinquishing actions meant for desired results (*kāmya-karmas*) there will be no possibility of being born in some desirable body. Since there is no cause to produce another body when the present body falls after the results of actions that produced this body get exhausted by experiencing them, and since one does not have attachment etc., therefore Liberation consists in the mere continuance of the Self in Its own natural state. Thus, Liberation is attained without effort.

Objection: May it not be argued that, since in the case of actions done in many past lives—which are calculated to yield such results as attainment of heaven, hell, etc. but have not commenced bearing results—there is no possibility of their being experienced, therefore they cannot be exhausted?

Pseudo-Vedāntin: No, since the suffering of pain from the effort involved in the *nityakarmas* can reasonably be (considered to be) the experiencing of their (256) results. Or, since the *nityakarmas*, like expiations, may be considered as being meant for eliminating the sins incurred earlier, and since actions that have begun bearing their fruits get exhausted merely through their being experienced, therefore Liberation is attained without effort provided no fresh actions are performed.

Vedāntin: No, since there is the Upaniṣadic text, 'Knowing Him alone, one goes beyond death; there is no other way to go by' (Śv. 3.8), which states that for Liberation there is no other path but enlightenment; also because there is the Upaniṣadic statement that Liberation for an

unenlightened person is as impossible as the rolling up of the sky like leather (Śv. 6.20); and since it is mentioned in the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis that Liberation follows only from Knowledge.

(From your view) it also follows that there is no possibility of the exhaustion of the results of *virtuous* deeds which have not as yet begun yielding their fruits. And, as there is the possibility of the persistence of *sins* which were incurred in the past but have not yet commenced yielding results, similarly there can be the possibility of the persistence of virtues which have not yet begun bearing fruits. And so, if there be no scope of their being exhausted without creating another body, then there is no possibility of Liberation. And since attachment, hatred and delusion, which are the causes of virtue and vice, cannot be eradicated through any means other than Knowledge, therefore the eradication of virtue and vice becomes impossible. Besides, since the Śruti (257) mentions that *nityakarmas* have heaven as their result, and there is the Smṛti text, 'Persons belonging to castes and stages of life, and engaged in their own duties' (258) (Āp. Dh. Sū. 2.2.2.3), etc., therefore the exhaustion of (the fruits of) actions (through *nityakarmas*) is not possible.

As for those who say, 'The *nityakarmas*, being painful in themselves, must surely be the result of evil deeds done in the past; but apart from being what they are, they have no other result because this is not mentioned in the Vedas and they are enjoined on the basis of the mere fact that one is alive'—(this is) not so, because actions which have not become operative cannot yield any result. Besides, there is no ground for experiencing a particular consequence in the form of pain. (259) The statement, that the pain one suffers from the effort involved in performing the *nityakarmas* is the result of sinful acts done in past lives, is false. Indeed, it does not stand to reason that the result of any action which did not become operative at the time of death to yield its fruit is experienced in a life produced by some other actions. Otherwise, there will be no reason why the fruit of some action that is to lead to hell should not be experienced in a life that is produced by such actions as Agnihotra etc. and is meant for enjoying the result in the form of heaven! Besides, that (pain arising from the effort in performing *nityakarmas*) cannot be the same as the consequence in the form of the particular suffering arising from sin.

Since there can be numerous kinds of sins with results productive of various kinds of sorrows, therefore, if it be imagined that their (sins') result will be merely in the form of pain arising from the effort in undertaking the *nityakarmas*, then it will certainly not be possible to suppose that they (the sins incurred in the past) are the causes of such obstacles as the pairs of opposites (heat and cold, etc.), disease etc., and that the result of sins incurred in the past will be only the pain arising from the exertion in performing *nityakarmas*, but not the sufferings like carrying stones on the head etc. Further, it is out of context to say this, that the pain resulting from the effort in performing *nityakarmas* is the result of sinful acts done in the past.

Objection: How?

Vedāntin: What is under discussion is that the sin committed in the past, which has not begun to bear fruit, cannot be dissipated. In that context you say that pain resulting from the effort in undertaking *nityakarmas* is the result of action which has begun bearing fruit, not of that which has not yet commenced yielding fruit!

On the other hand, if you think that all sins committed in the past have begun yielding their results, then it is unreasonable to specify that the pain resulting from the exertion in performing the *nityakarmas* is their only result. And there arises the contingency of the injunction to perform *nityakarmas* becoming void, because the sinful deed which has begun bearing fruit can logically be dissipated only be experiencing its result. Further, if pain be the result of *nityakarmas* enjoined by the Vedas, then it is seen to arise from the very effort in undertaking *nityakarmas*—as in the case of exercise etc. To imagine that it is the result of something else is illogical. (260)

And if the *nityakarmas* have been enjoined simply on the basis of a person's being alive, it is unreasonable that it should be the result of sins committed in the past, any more than expiation is. An expiation that has been enjoined following a particular sinful act is not the result of that sin! On the other hand, if the suffering arising from expiation be the result of that very sin which is its cause, then the pain from the effort in performing *nityakarmas*, though prescribed merely on the fact of one's being alive, may

become the fruit of that very fact of one's being alive—which was itself the occasion (for enjoining the *nityakarmas*)—, because both the *nityakarmas* and expiatory duties are indistinguishable so far as their being occasioned by something is concerned.

Moreover, there is the other fact: There can be no such distinction that only the pain resulting from the performance of *nityakarmas* is the result of past sinful deeds, but not so the pain from performing *kāmya-karmas* (rites and duties undertaken for desired results), because the pain in performing Agnihotra-sacrifice etc. is the same when it is performed as a *nityakarma* or as a *kāmya-karma*. Thus the latter also may be the result of past sinful acts.

This being the case, it is untenable to assume on the ground of circumstantial inference that, since no result is enjoined in the Vedas for *nityakarmas* and since its prescription cannot be justified on any other ground, therefore pain from the effort in performing *nityakarmas* is the result of sinful past deeds. Thus, the (Vedic) injunction being unjustifiable otherwise, it can be inferred that *nityakarmas* have got some result other than the pain arising from the effort in undertaking them. It also involves this contradiction: It is contradictory to say that through the performance of *nityakarma* a result of some other action is experienced. And when this is admitted, it is again a contradiction to say that that very experience is the result of the *nityakarma*, and yet that *nityakarma* has no result!

Moreover, when Agnihotra and other sacrifices are performed for desirable results (Kāmya-Agnihotra), then the Agnihotra etc. which are performed as *nityakarma* (Nitya-Agnihotra) become accomplished simultaneously (on account of its being a part of the former). Hence, since the Kāmya-Agnihotra (as an act) is dependent on and not different from the Nitya-Agnihotra, therefore the result of the Agnihotra and other sacrifices performed with a desire for results will get exhausted through the suffering involved in the exertion in undertaking it (the Nitya-Agnihotra). On the other hand, if the result of Kāmya-Agnihotra etc. be different, viz. heaven etc., then even the suffering arising from the exertion in performing them ought to be necessarily different (from the suffering involved in the Nitya-Agnihotra). And that is not the fact, because it contradicts what is directly perceived; for the pain resulting from the effort in performing only the

Nitya (-Agnihotra) does not differ from the pain resulting from the exertion in undertaking the Kāmya (-Agnihotra).

Besides, there is this other consideration: Actions which have not been enjoined or prohibited (by the scriptures) produce immediate results. But those enjoined or prohibited by the scriptures do not produce immediate results; were they to do so, then there would be no effort even with regard to heaven etc. and injunctions concerning unseen results.

And it cannot be imagined that only the fruit of (Nitya-) Agnihotra etc. gets exhausted through the suffering arising from the effort in performing them, but the Kāmya (-Agnihotra) has exalted results like heaven etc. merely as a consequence of the fact of desire for results, though as acts there is no essential difference between them (the Nitya and the Kāmya) and there is no additional subsidiary part, processes of performance, etc. (in the Kāmya-Agnihotra). Therefore, it can never be established that *nitya-karmas* have no unseen results. And hence, enlightenment alone, not the performance of *nityakarmas*, is the cause of the total dissipation of actions done through ignorance, be they good or bad. For, all actions have for their origin ignorance and desire.

Thus has it been established (in the following passages) that action (rites and duties) is meant for the ignorant, and steadfastness in Knowledge—after renunciation of all actions—is meant for the enlightened: 'both of them do not know' (2.19); 'he who knows this One as indestructible, eternal' (2.21); 'through the Yoga of Knowledge for the men of realization; through the Yoga of Action for the yogīs' (3.3); 'the ignorant, who are attached to work' (3.26); 'But … the one who is a knower … does not become attached, thinking thus: "The organs rest on the objects of the organs"' (3.28); 'The embodied man … having given up all actions mentally, continues' (5.13); 'Remaining absorbed in the Self, the knower of Reality should think, "I certainly do not do anything"' (5.8); that is, the unenlightened person thinks, 'I do'; 'For (the sage) who wishes to ascend (to Dhyana-yoga), action is said to be the means when he has ascended (when he is established in the Yoga of Meditation), inaction alone is said to be the means' (6.3); 'noble indeed' are all the three (classes of) unenlightened persons, 'but the man of Knowledge is the very Self. (This

is) My opinion' (7.18); the unenlightened who perform their rites and duties, 'who are desirous of pleasures, attain the state of going and returning' (9.21); 'becoming non-different from Me and meditative' (9.22) and endowed with steadfast devotion, they worship (Me) the Self which has been described as comparable to space and taintless; and 'I grant that possession of wisdom by which they reach Me' (10.10); that is, the unenlightened persons who perform rites and duties 'do not reach Me.'

Those who perform works for the Lord and who, though they be the most devout, are ignorant persons performing rites and duties,—they remain involved in practices which, in a descending order, culminate in giving up the fruit of actions (cf. 12.6-11). But those who meditate on the indefinable Immutable take recourse to the disciplines stated in the passages beginning with 'He who is not hateful towards any creature' (12.13) and ending with that Chapter, and also resort to the path of Knowledge presented in the three chapters beginning with the Chapter on the 'field'. The three results of actions, viz. the undesirable etc. (cf. 12), do not accrue only to the mendicants belonging to the Order of Paramahaṁsas (the highest Order of monks)—who have renounced all actions that originate from the five causes beginning with the locus (cf. 14), who possess the knowledge of the oneness and non-agentship of the Self (17, 20), who continue in the supreme steadfastness in Knowledge, who know the real nature of the Lord, and who have taken refuge in the unity of the real nature of the Lord with the Self. It does accrue to the others who are not monks, the ignorant persons who perform rites and duties. Such is this distinction made in the scripture Gītā with regard to what is duty and what is not.

Objection: May it not be argued that it cannot be proved that all actions are due to ignorance?

Reply: No, (it can be proved,) as in the case of slaying a Brāhmin. Although the *nityakarmas* are known from the scriptures, still they are meant only for the ignorant. As such an action as killing a Brāhmin, even though known to be a source of evil from the scripture prohibiting it, is still perpetrated by one who has defects such as ignorance, passion, etc.—because impulsion to any action is otherwise not possible—, so also is it with regard to the *nitya*, *naimittika*, and *kāmya* actions.

Objection: May it not be held that impulsion to *nityakarma* etc. is not possible if the Self be not known as a distinct entity? (261)

Reply: No, since it is seen that with regard to actions which are of the nature of motion and are accomplished by the not-Self, one engages in them with the idea, 'I do.' (262)

Objection: Can it not be said that the notion of egoism with regard to the aggregate of body etc. occurs in a figurative sense; is it not false?

Reply: No, since its effects (263) also will become figurative.

Objection: The notion of 'I' with regard to the aggregate of one's own body etc. occurs in a figurative sense. As with regard to one's own son it is said (in the Veda), 'It is you yourself who is called the son' (Śa. Bṛ. 14.9.4.26), and in common parlance also it is said, 'This cow is my very life', so is the case here. (264) This is certainly not a false notion. However, a false notion (of identity) occurs in the case of a stump and a man, when the distinction between them is not evident (due to darkness).

Reply: A figuratively expressed notion cannot lead to an effect in the real sense, because that (notion) is used for the eulogy of its basis with the help of a word of comparison which remains understood. As for instance, such sentences as, 'Devadatta is a lion', 'The boy is a fire'—implying 'like a lion', 'like a fire', on the basis of the similarity of cruelty, the tawny colour, etc.—are meant only for eulogizing Devadatta and the boy who are the basis (i.e. the subjects of the two sentences). But no action of a lion or a fire is accomplished because of the use of the figurative words or ideas. On the contrary, one experiences the evil effects of false notions. (265) And with regard to the subjects of the figurative notions, one understands, 'This Devadatta cannot be a lion; this boy cannot be a fire.' Similarly, actions done by the aggregate of body etc., which is the 'Self' in a figurative sense, cannot be held to have been done by the Self which is the real subject of the notion of 'I'. For, actions done by the figurative lion or fire cannot be considered to have been accomplished by the real lion or fire. Nor is any action of the real lion and fire accomplished through the (figurative) cruelty or tawnyness; for, their purpose is fully served by being used for eulogy. And those who are praised know, 'I am not a lion; I am not fire; and neither

is the work of a lion or fire mine.' So the more logical notion is, 'The action of the aggregate (of body etc.) do not belong to me who am the real Self', and not, 'I am the agent; it is my work.'

As for the assertion made by some that the Self acts through Its own memory, desire and effort, which are the causes of activity—that is not so, for they are based on false knowledge. Memory, desire, effort, etc. indeed follow from the tendencies born from the experience of the desirable and the undesirable results of actions (—which actions themselves arise from the notions of the 'desirable' and the 'undesirable') caused by false knowledge. (266) Just as in this life virtue, vice and the experience of their results are caused by the identification (of the Self) with the aggregate of body etc. and attraction, repulsion, etc., so also was it in the previous birth, and even in the life preceding that. Thus it can be inferred that past and future mundane existence is without beginning and is a product of ignorance. And from this it becomes proved that the absolute cessation of mundane existence is caused by steadfastness in Knowledge, accompanied by renunciation of all rites and duties.

Besides, since self-identification with the body is nothing but ignorance, therefore, when the (ignorance) ceases, there remains no possibility of re-birth, and so, mundane existence becomes impossible. The identification of the Self with the aggregate of body etc. is nothing but ignorance, because in common life it is not seen that anybody who knows, 'I am different from cattle etc., and the cattle etc. are different from me', entertains the notion of 'I' with regard to them. However, mistaken perceiving a stump to be a man, one may out of indiscrimination entertain the idea of 'I' with regard to the aggregate of body etc.; not so when perceiving them as distinct. As for that notion of considering the son to be oneself—as mentioned in, 'It is you yourself who is called the son' (Śa. Bṛ. 14.9.4.26)—, that is a metaphor based on the relationship between the begotten and the begetter. And no real action like eating etc., can be accomplished through something considered metaphorically as the Self, just as actions of the real lion or fire (cannot be accomplished) by someone metaphorically thought of to be a lion or fire.

Objection: Since an injunction relating to an unseen result is valid, therefore, may it not be said that the purposes of the Self are accomplished

by the body and organs which are figuratively considered to be the Self?

Reply: No, since the thinking of them as the Self is the result of ignorance. The body, organs, etc. are not the Self in a figurative sense.

Objection: How then?

Reply: Although the Self is devoid of relationship, still, by an ascription of relationship (to the Self), they (body etc.) come to be regarded as the Self, verily through a false notion. For, this identification (of body etc.) with the Self exists so long as the false notion is there, and ceases to exist when it is not there. So long as ignorance lasts, identification of the Self with the aggregate of body and organs is seen only in the case of non-discriminating, immature, ignorant people who say, 'I am tall', 'I am fair'. But in the case of discriminating persons who possess the knowledge, 'I am different from the aggregate of body etc.', there does not arise the idea of egoism with regard to the body etc. at that time (that is simultaneously with that knowledge). Hence, since it (that is identification of the Self with the body etc.) ceases in the absence of the false notion, therefore it is a creation of that (false notion), and not a figurative notion.

It is only when the common and the uncommon features of the lion and Devadatta, or of fire and the boy, are known distinctly, that a figurative notion or verbal expression can occur; not when the common and the uncommon features are unknown.

As for the argument that (the figurative notion should be accepted) on the authority of the Vedas, we say, 'No', because their validity concerns unseen results. The validity of the Vedas holds good only with regard to matters concerning the relation between ends and means of Agnihotra etc., which are not known through such valid means of knowledge as direct perception; but not with regard to objects of direct perception etc., because the validity of the Vedas lies in revealing what is beyond direct perception. Therefore it is not possible to imagine that the idea of egoism with regard to the aggregate of body etc., arising from an obviously false knowledge, is a figurative notion. Surely, even a hundred Vedic texts cannot become valid if they assert that fire is cold or non-luminous! Should a Vedic text say that fire is cold or non-luminous, even then one has to assume that the intended

meaning of the text is different, for otherwise (its) validity cannot be maintained; but one should not assume its meaning in a way that might contradict some other valid means of knowledge or contradict its own statement.

Objection: May it not be said that since actions are undertaken by one possessed of a false idea of agentship, therefore, when the agent ceases to be so (267) the Vedas will become invalid?

Reply: No, since the Vedas become logically meaningful in respect of knowledge of Brahman. (268)

Objection: May it not be said that there arises the contingency of the Vedic texts enjoining knowledge of Brahman becoming as invalid as those texts enjoining rites and duties?

Reply: No, since there cannot possibly be any notion which can remove (the knowledge of Brahman). Unlike the manner in which the idea of egoism with regard to the aggregate of body etc. is removed after the realization of the Self from hearing the Vedic injunctions regarding the knowledge of Brahman, the realization of the Self in the Self can never be removed in any way in that manner by anything whatsoever—just as the knowledge that fire is hot and luminous is irremovable—, since (Self-)realization is inseparable from its result (that is cessation of ignorance).

Besides, the Vedic texts enjoining rites (and duties) etc. are not invalid, because they, through the generation of successively newer tendencies by eliminating the successively preceding tendencies, are meant for creating the tendency to turn towards the indwelling Self. (269) Although the means be unreal (in itself), still it may be meaningful in relation to the truth of the purpose it serves, as are the eulogistic sentences (*arthavāda*) (270) occuring along with injunctions. Even in the world, when it becomes necessary to make to child or a lunatic drink milk etc. it is said that it will help growth of hair (271) etc.! Before the dawn of Knowledge, the (ritualistic) Vedic texts concerned with a different situation (272) are also as valid in themselves as are direct perception etc. occurring due to Self-identification with the body etc. On the other hand, as for your view ‘The Self, though inactive by Itself,

acts through Its mere proximity; and that itself constitutes agentship of the Self in the primary sense. Just as it is well known that a king, though not himself engaged in a battle, is, merely by virtue of his being in charge, said to be fighting when his soldiers are fighting, and that he is victorious or defeated; similarly, as the commander of an army acts through his mere orders, and it is seen that the results of the actions accrue to the king or to the commander; or, just as the actions of the priests are ascribed to the sacrificer,—in that very manner the actions done by the body etc. ought to be of the Self because the result of those actions accrues to the Self. And, as the agentship of a magnet which, in fact, is not active, is attributed to it in the primary sense because it causes a piece of iron to move, similar is the agentship of the Self'—that is wrong, since it will amount to an inactive entity becoming an agent.

Objection: May not agentship be of various kinds?

Reply: No, for in the case of the 'king' and others it is seen that they have agentship even in the primary sense. As for the king, he fights even through his personal engagement. And he has agentship in the primary sense by virtue of making (his) warriors fight, distributing wealth, and also reaping the fruits of victory or defeat. Similarly, the agentship of a sacrificer is primary by virtue of his offering the main oblation and giving gifts due to the priests. Therefore it is understood that the agentship which is attributed to an inactive entity is figurative.

If primary agentship consisting in their personal engagement is not perceived in the case of the king, a sacrificer and others, then it could be assumed that they have primary agentship owing to the mere fact of their presence, just as a magnet has by virtue of making the iron move. But in the case of the king and others it is not perceived that they have no personal engagement in that way. Therefore, even the agentship owing to mere presence is a figurative one. And if that be so, the connection with the result of such agentship will also be figurative. No action in the primary sense is performed by an agent figuratively thought to be so. Hence the assertion is certainly wrong that owing to the activities of the body etc. the actionless Self becomes an agent and experiencer. But everything becomes possible due to error. This is just as it happens in dream or in jugglery!

Besides, in deep sleep, absorption in Brahman, etc. where the current of the mistaken idea of Self-identity with the body etc. ceases, evils like agentship, enjoyership, etc. are not perceived. Therefore this delusion of mundane existence is surely due to false knowledge; but it is not reality. Consequently, it is established that it ceases absolutely as a result of full enlightenment.

Having summed up in this chapter the import of the whole of the scripture Gītā, and having again summarized it specially here at the end (in verse 66) for the sake of emphasizing the purport of the Scripture, now after that, the Lord states the rules for handing down the Scripture:

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन।
न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति॥६७॥

67. This (that I have taught) you should not ever be taught to one who is devoid of austerities and to one who is not a devotee; also, neither to one who does not render service, nor as well to one who cavils at Me.

Idam, this Scripture; which has been taught by Me *te*, to you, for your good, for terminating mundane existence; *na vācyam*, should not be taught (—*na* is connected with the remote word *vācyam*—); *atapaskāya*, to one who is devoid of austerities. It should *kadācana*, never, under any condition whatsoever; be taught *abhaktāya*, to one who is not a devotee, who is devoid of devotion to his teacher and God, even if he be a man of austerity. Neither should it be taught even *aśuśrūṣave*, to one who does not render service—even though he may be a devotee and a man of austerity. *Na ca*, nor as well; to him *yaḥ*, who; *abhyasūyati*, cavils; *mām*, at Me, at Vāsudeva—thinking that I am an ordinary person; to him who, not knowing My Godhood, imputes self-adulation etc. to Me and cannot tolerate Me. He too is unfit; to him also it should not be imparted.

From the force of the context it is understood that the Scripture should be taught to one who has devotion to the Lord, is austere, renders service, and does not cavil. As to that, since it is seen (in a Smṛti)—'to one who is intelligent or to one who is austere'—that there is an option between the two, it follows that this should be imparted either to an austere person given to service and devotion, or to an intelligent person endowed with them. It

should not be imparted to an austere or even an intelligent person if he lacks service and devotion. It should not be taught to one who cavils at the Lord, even though he be possessed of all the good qualities. And it should be taught to one who serves his teacher and is devout. This is the rule for transmitting the Scripture.

Now the Lord states the fruit derived by one who transmits the Scripture:

य इमं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः॥६८॥

68. He who, entertaining supreme devotion to Me, will speak of this highest secret to My devotees will without doubt reach Me alone.

Yaḥ, he who; *abhi-dhāsyati*, will speak of, that is, will present with the help of the text and its meaning, as I have done to you; *imam*, this; *paramam*, highest—that which has Liberation as its purpose; *guhyam*, secret, as spoken of above—(that is) the text in the form of a conversation between Keśava and Arjuna; *madbhakteṣu*, to My devotees—. How will he present? This is being stated: *Kṛtvā*, entertaining; *parām*, supreme; *bhaktim*, devotion; *mayi*, to Me, that is, entertaining an idea thus—'A service is being rendered by me to the Lord who is the supreme Teacher'—. To him comes this result: *eṣyati*, he will reach; *mām*, Me; *eva*, alone. He is certainly freed. No doubt should be entertained in this regard.

By the repetition of (the word) *bhakti* (devotion) (273), it is understood that one becomes fit for being taught (this) Scripture by virtue of devotion alone to Him.

Besides,

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि॥६९॥

69. And as compared with him, none else among human beings is the best accomplisher of what is dear to Me. Moreover, nor will there be anyone else in the world dearer to Me than he.

Ca, and; *tasmāt*, as compared with him, with the one who hands down the Scripture; *na kaścit*, none else; *manuṣyeṣu*, among human beings; is *priya-kṛt-tamaḥ*, the best accomplisher of what is dear; *me*, to Me, that is, among the present human beings, surely none else other than him exists who is a better accomplisher of what I cherish. Moreover, *na bhavitā*, nor will there be in future; *anyaḥ*, anyone else, a second person; *bhuvi*, in the world, here; *priyataraḥ*, dearer; *tasmāt*, than him. (274)

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः॥७०॥

70. And he who will study this sacred conversation between us two, which is conducive to virtue, by him I shall be adored through the Sacrifice in the form of Knowledge. This is My judgement.

Ca, and; even he *yaḥ*, who; *adhyeṣyate*, will study; *imam*, this; *saṁvādam*, conversation, the text in the form of a dialogue; between *āvayoḥ*, us two; which is *dharmyam*, conducive to virtue, not divorced from virtue; *tena*, by him; this will be accomplished through that study: *aham*, I; *syām*, shall be; *iṣṭaḥ*, adored; *jñāna-yajñena*, through the Sacrifice in the form of Knowledge. *Iti*, this; is *me*, My; *matiḥ*, judgement. As compared with the various sacrifices, viz. rituals, loud prayer, prayer uttered in a low voice and mental prayer, the Sacrifice in the from of Knowledge is the best (275) because it is mental. Hence, the study of the scripture *Gītā* is praised as that Sacrifice in the form of Knowledge. Or, this (verse) may merely be a judgement about the result. The idea is that the result of the study is comparable to the result of the Sacrifice in the form of the knowledge of gods and others.

Now, this is the reward for the hearer :

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाँल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम्॥७१॥

71. Any man who, being reverential and free from cavilling, might even hear (this), he too, becoming free, shall attain the blessed worlds of those who perform virtuous deeds.

Yaḥ naraḥ, any man who; being *śraddhāvān*, reverential; and *anasūyaḥ*, free from cavilling; *śṛṇuyāt api*, might even hear this text—the word *even* suggests that one who knows the meaning (of the Scripture) hardly needs to be mentioned—; *saḥ api*, he too; becoming *muktaḥ*, free from sin; *prāpnuyāt*, shall attain; *śubhān*, the blessed, auspicious; *lokān*, worlds; *puṇya-karmaṇām*, of those who perform virtuous deeds, of those who perform rites like Agnihotra etc.

In order to ascertaining whether or not the disciple has comprehended the meaning of the Scripture, the Lord asks (the following question), the intention of the questioner being, 'If it is known that it has not been comprehended, I shall again make him grasp it through other means.' Hereby is shown the duty of the teacher that a student should be made to achieve his goal by taking the help of a different method.

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा।
कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय॥७२॥

72. O Pārtha, has this been listened to by you with a one-pointed mind? O Dhanañjaya, has your delusion caused by ignorance been destroyed?

O Pārtha, *kaccit etat*, has this that has been said by Me; been *śrutam*, listened to, grasped through hearing; *ekāgreṇa*, with a one-pointed; *cetasā*, mind? Or have you been inattentive? O Dhanañjaya, *kaccit*, has; *te*, your; *ajñāna-sammohaḥ*, delusion caused by ignorance, bewilderment, natural indiscrimination; been *pranaṣṭaḥ*, destroyed, for which purpose has there been this effort on your part for hearing the Scripture, and on My part, the effort of being a teacher?

Arjuna said:

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव॥७३॥

73. O Acyuta, (my) delusion has been destroyed, and memory has been regained by me through Your grace. I stand with my doubt removed; I shall follow Your instruction.

O Acyuta, (my) *mohaḥ*, delusion, born of ignorance and the cause of all evil in the form of mundane existence, and difficult to cross like an ocean; *naṣṭaḥ*, has been destroyed. And *smṛtiḥ*, memory, regarding the reality of the Self—on the acquisition of which follows the loosening of all the bonds; *labdhā*, has been regained, *tvat-prasādāt*, through Your grace *mayā*, by me, who am dependent on Your grace.

By this question about the destruction of delusion and the answer to it, it becomes conclusively revealed that the fruit derived from understanding the import of the entire Scripture is this much alone—which is the destruction of delusion arising from ignorance and the regaining of the memory about the Self. And similarly, in the Upaniṣadic text beginning with 'I grieve because I am not a knower of the Self' (Ch. 7.1.3), it is shown that all bonds become destroyed when the Self is realized. There are also the words of the Upaniṣadic verses, 'The knot of the heart gets untied' (Mu. 2.2.8); 'at that time (or to that Self) what delusion and what sorrow can there be for that seer of oneness?' (Īś.7).

Now then, *sthitaḥ asmi*, I stand under Your command; *gata-sandehaḥ*, with (my) doubts removed. *Kariṣye*, I shall follow; *tava*, Your; *vacanam*, instruction. By Your grace I have achieved the goal of life. The idea is, there is no duty, as such, for me.

The teaching of the Scripture is concluded. Thereafter, now in order to show the connection (of this) with the (main) narrative—.

Sañjaya said:

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥७४॥

74. I thus heard this conversation of Vāsudeva and of the great-souled Pārtha, which is unique and makes one's hair stand on end.

Aham, I; *iti*, thus; *aśrauṣam*, heard; *imam*, this; *saṁvādam*, conversation, as has been narrated; *vāsudevasya*, of Vāsudeva; and *mahātmanaḥ pārthasya*, of the great-souled Pārtha; which is *adbhutam*, unique, extremely wonderful; and *roma-harṣaṇam*, makes one's hair stand on end.

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद् गुह्यमहं परम्।
योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम्॥७५॥

75. Through the favour of Vyāsa, I heard this secret concerning the supreme Yoga from Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of yogas, while He Himself was actually speaking!

And *vyāsa-prasādāt*, through the favour of Vyāsa, by having received divine vision from him; *aham*, I; *śrutavān*, heard; *etat* *(276)* (should rather be *etam*), this; *guhyam*, secret dialogue, such as it is; concerning the *param*, supreme; *Yogam*, Yoga—or, this dialogue itself is the Yoga because it is meant for it—; *kṛṣṇāt*, from Kṛṣṇa; *yogeśwarāt*, from the Lord of yogas; *kathayataḥ*, while He was speaking; *svayam*, Himself; *sākṣāt*, actually; not indirectly through others.

राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम्।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः॥७६॥

76. And, O King, while repeatedly remembering this unique, sacred dialogue between Keśava and Arjuna, I rejoice every moment.

And, *rājan*, O King, Dhṛtarāṣṭra; after having heard, *saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya*, while repeatedly remembering; *imam*, this; *adbhutam*, unique; *saṁvādam*, dialogue; *keśava-arjunayoḥ*, between Keśava and Arjuna; which is *puṇyam*, sacred, removes sin even when heard; *hṛṣyāmi*, I rejoice; *muhuḥ muhuḥ*, every moment.

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः।
विस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः॥७७॥

77. O King, repeatedly recollecting that greatly extraordinary form of Hari, I am struck with wonder. And I rejoice again and again.

And, *rājan*, O King; *saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya*, repeatedly recollecting; *tat*, that; *ati-adbhutam*, greatly extraordinary; *rūpam*, form, the Cosmic form; *hareḥ*, of Hari; *mahān vismayaḥ me*, I am struck with great wonder. And *hṛṣyāmi*, I rejoice; *punaḥ punaḥ*, again and again.

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम॥७८॥

78. Where there is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of yogas, and where there is Pārtha, the wielder of the bow, there are fortune, victory, prosperity and unfailing prudence. Such is my conviction.

To be brief, *yatra*, where, the side on which; there is Kṛṣṇa, *yogeśwaraḥ*, the Lord of yogas—who is the Lord of all the yogas and the source of all the yogas, since they originate from Him; and *yatra*, where, the side on which; there is Pārtha, *dhanurdharaḥ*, the wielder of the bow, of the bow called Gāṇḍīva; *tatra*, there, on that side of the Pāṇḍavas; are *śrīḥ*, fortune; *vijayaḥ*, victory; and there itself is *bhūtiḥ*, prosperity, great abundance of fortune; and *dhruvā*, unfailing; *nītiḥ*, prudence. Such is *me*, my; *matih*, conviction.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

[197] If the intention is to sum up here the meaning of the entire Vedas, then why is a part of them, *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*—referred to in, ‘Some attained Immortality through *tyāga*’ (Kai. 2) and, ‘Through the yoga of *sannyāsa*’ (Mu. 3.2.6)—, taken up for discussion? This is because Arjuna thinks that the two words *tyāga* and *sannyāsa* have something, viz. giving up, common between them, and hence wants to know their distinction clearly.

(Ś.:) The giving up of *action* and the giving up of the *results* of actions have been stated in the relevant places: ‘…by dedicating all actions to Me, with (your) mind intent on the Self’ (3.30), ‘As for those who, having dedicated all actions to Me and accepted Me as the supreme’ (12.6), ‘…Having your mind imbued with the yoga of renunciation’ (9.28), ‘…renounce the results of all works’ (12.11). Having heard that actions have to be undertaken by giving up the desire for their results, and also that actions, as such, have to be given up, Arjuna thinks that a man in a particular stage of life (*āśrama*) cannot take recourse to both, and so he wants to know how these two disciplines are to be practised.

[198] *Tamas*: darkness, mental darkness, ignorance; one of the three qualities of everything in Nature. Also see 14.8, and note under 2.45.—Tr.

[199] Which support the two earlier arguments.

[200] As being impossible to accomplish.

[201] The six auxiliaries are: Śikṣā (Phonetics), Kalpa (Code of Rituals and Sacrifices), Vyākaraṇa (Grammar), Nirukta (Etymology), Chandas (Meter, Prosody), and Jyotiṣa (Astronomy).—Tr.

[202] Another reading is *etāni*.—Tr.

[203] *Categories*: locus (body) etc.

[204] In the sentence, 'Thou art That', the word *Thou* means the individual Self, and *That* means Brahman. The comprehension of their unity, and also 'hearing, reflection and meditation' are referred to as the *subject-matters*.

[205] The individual Self which has intelligence etc. as its limiting adjuncts, due to which it appears to possess their characteristics and become identified with them.

[206] The five organs of knowledge (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin), the five organs of actions (hands, feet, speech, organ of excretion and that of generation), the mind and the intellect.

[207] Seeing etc. are accomplished by the eye etc., which are part and parcel of the body etc.

[208] Actions are done by the body etc., but since a person thinks that the Self is the agent, therefore he is said to have a perverted intellect.

[209] Aṣṭ. omits *anyam* (distinct).—Tr.

[210] Some translate this portion thus: '...because of the absence of the *thought* 'I am doing', and also due to the taintlessness of the mind'; or, '...in the absence of egotism and of all taint in the mind'.—Tr.

[211] Acceptance, rejection or indifference.

[212] It is well known that actions are based on the three—instrument, etc.

[213] As possessing distinct selves.

[214] Aṣṭ. introduces this verse with '*Idānīm kartṛbhedaḥ ucyate*, Now is being stated the distinctions among the agents.'—Tr.

[215] *Attachment* to results or the idea of agentship.

[216] *Etc*. stands for attachment to work.

[217] A variant reading is *naikṛtikaḥ*.—Tr.

[218]Aṣṭ. adds here, '*sarvadā mandasvabhāvaḥ*, always slow by nature'.—Tr.

[219] Aṣṭ. adds *laukike vaidike vā* (ordinary or Vedic injunctions and prohibitions) after *vihita-pratiṣiddhe*; and it adds *śāstrabuddheḥ* before *kartavya-akartavye*—what ought to be done or ought not to be done by one who relies on the scriptures.—Tr.

[220] By *dharma* and *adharma* are implied the seen and the unseen results of actions as revealed by the scriptures; *kārya* and *akārya* respectively refer to the actual doing of what ought to be done and the not doing of what ought not to be done.

[221] Some editions read *pārtha* in place of *matā* (considered).—Tr.

[222] Ś. and Ś.S. take the second line of this verse along with the next verse referring to *sāttvika* happiness.—Tr.

[223] *Prajñā*, the capacity to understand whatever is heard.

[224] The *section* showing that all things in the whole of creation are under the influence of the three *guṇas*.

[225] Śūdras have no right to be invested with the sacred thread which, in the case of the other three castes, symbolizes a second birth.

[226] i.e. the tendencies are the efficient cause, and Nature is the material cause.

[227] Knowledge refers to the understanding of subjects presented by the scriptures; wisdom means making them matters of one's own experience.

[228] Truth of the scritpures, existence of God, etc. In place of *asti-bhāvaḥ* Aṣṭ reads *āstika-bhāvaḥ*, the feeling of conviction with regard to the existence of God and the other world.—Tr.

[229] A variant reading is *kṣātram karma*.—Tr.

[230] Evil resulting from discarding daily obligatory duties.

[231] *Rūpa* (form), *vedanā* (feeling), *vijñāna* (momentary consciousness), *saṅjñā* (notion), *saṁskāra* (mental impressions)—these have only momentary existence. In their case there can be no distinction between action and agent, simply due to the fact of their being momentary.

[232] Their view is that agentship consists in 'possessing the power to act', not in being the substratum of action.

[233] Here Aṣṭ. adds, '*sadeva asattvam āpadyate*, that which is verily existent becomes non-existent'.—Tr.

[234] According to Vedānta, before origination a thing, e.g. a pot, remains latent in its material cause, clay for instance, with its name and form unexpressed, and it depends on other causes for the manifestation of name and form.

[235] The effect (dyad) has inherent relationship with existence after its material causes (the two atoms) come into association.

[236] Such as production, destruction, etc.

[237] *Etc*. stands for 'mutual non-existence (*anyonya-abhāva*)' and 'absolute non-existence (*atyanta-abhāva*)'.

[238] that is in the origination of a transformation that did not exist before.

[239] Firmness in Self-realization.

[240]The inmost Ruler (*antaryāmin*), possessing a semblance of Consciousness.

[241] According to Aṣṭ. the latter portion of this sentence is: *svārthāḥ sarvāḥ pravṛttayaḥ vyarthāḥ prasajyeran*, all activities meant for one's own benefit would become meaningless.—Tr.

[242] According to B.S. 3.4.26, 'On the strength of the Upaniṣadic sanction of sacrifices etc. all religious activities as well are necessary...', sacrifices etc. are meant for leading to the realization of the Self, without which they would become meaningless.

[243] This is Aṣṭ.'s reading; others read *tathā*.—Tr.

[244] In place of *anātma-buddhi-nivṛttau*, Aṣṭ. has '*anātmani ātma-buddhi-nivṛttau*, for the termination of thinking what is not the Self as the Self'.—Tr.

[245] Sound, touch, form and colour, taste and smell.—Tr.

[246] A formula of prayer sacred to any deity.—V.S.A.

[247] *Prasāda* means the manifestation of the supreme Bliss of the Self as a result of the total cessation of all evils. *Prasanna-ātmā* is one who has attained this in the present life itself.

[248] In points of all-pervasiveness and non-attachment.

[249] In place of *phalāntarābhāva-jñāna-mātram eva*, Aṣṭ. reads '*phalāntarābhāvāt jñānamātram eva*, absolute Knowledge itself, since there is no other result'.—Tr.

[250] *Svabhāva* means those tendencies which are created by good and bad actions performed in previous births, and which become the cause of performance of duties, renunciation, experience of happiness, sorrow, etc. in the present birth.—Ś.

[251] Derived in the instrumental sense of 'means of knowledge'; i.e. the scripture *Gītā*.

[252] Being a Kṣatriya, Arjuna is not qualified for steadfastness in Knowledge through monasticism in the primary sense. Still, the *Gītā*

being meant for mankind as a whole, monasticism is spoken of here by accepting Arjuna as a representative man.

[253] As such a common action as eating can go hand in hand with such Vedic rites as the Agnihotra-sacrifice, so, actions can be combined with Knowledge.

[254] *Action*, that is digging etc.; *result*, that is bathing etc.

[255] As also the occasional duties (*naimittika-karmas*).

[256] i.e. of actions done in past lives, which have not commenced bearing their fruits.—Tr.

[257] See Ch. 2.23.1 and Bṛ. 1.5.16—Tr.

[258] '...attain to a high, immeasurable happiness.'—Tr.

[259] Pain involved in the performance of nityakarmas.

[260] The pain arising from bodily exercise is the result of the exercise itself, and not the result of any past sin! Similarly, the pain resulting from undertaking *nityakarmas* is the consequence of that performance itself, and need not be imagined to be the result of any past sin.

[261] Unless one knows the Self to be distinct from the body etc. he will not perform the *nityakarmas* etc. meant for results in the other worlds, viz. heaven etc.

(Tr.:) In place of *vyatiriktātmani*, Aṣṭ. reads '*deha-vyatiriktātmani*, the Self which is distinct from the body'.

[262] The actionless Self is not the agent of the movements of the body etc. Still agentship is superimposed on It through ignorance.

[263] i.e. the effects of the notion of egoism.

[264] As the use of the word 'I' with regard to a son is figurative, so also with regard to the body.

[265] Therefore the idea of 'I' with regard to one's body etc. does not occur in a secondary sense, but it does so falsely.

[266] False knowledge gives rise to the ideas of the desirable and the undesirable. From these arise desire and repulsion. Actions which follow give rise to the *experience* of their desirable and undesirable results. Such experiences create impressions in the mind, from which are born memory etc.

[267] ‘According to you (the Vedāntin), an ignorant man alone can be an agent. Therefore, when he becomes illumined, he will cease to be ignorant and consequently the Vedas will cease to be valid for him.’

[268] Though the Vedic injunctions about rituals etc. be inapplicable in the case of an enlightened person, still they have empirical validity before enlightenment. Besides, the Vedas have real validity with regard to the knowledge of Brahman.

[269] The Vedic injunctions make people take up rituals etc. by giving up their earlier worldly tendencies. Thereby their minds become purified. The purified mind then aspires to know the indwelling Self. Thus, since the ritualistic injunctions are meant for making a person turn towards the knowledge of the indwelling Self, they are not invalid.

[270] See footnote 21 of Chapter 2.—Tr.

[271] *Cūḍā*, lit. hair on the top of the head; or single lock of hair left on the crown of the head after tonsure. See V.S.A.

[272] The situation obtaining before the dawn of Self-knowledge.

[273] In the word *madbhakteṣu*.

[274] It may be argued that, since for a seeker of Liberation meditation is the best means for It, therefore he will have no inclination to transmit scriptural teachings. To this the Lord’s answer is: One longing for Liberation has a duty to impart this scriptural teaching to one possessing the aforesaid qualities.

[275] See 4.33.

[276] The Commentator uses *etam* in the masculine gender, in place of *etat* in the text, because it refers to the masculine word *saṁvāda*.

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